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Rev. John D. Wells,

of Cambridge, Mass.

OUR

Little Ones in Heaven.

EDITED BY THE AUTHOR OF

"THE AIMWELL STORIES," ETC.

"Soon, soon, thy little feet have trod
The skyward path, the seraph's road,
That led thee back from man to God."

D. M. Moir.

BOSTON:
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Gift of

Rev. John D. Wells (57)

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PREFACE.

THE death of young children is one of the most common afflictions that befall the human family. According to a recent medical authority, twenty-two per cent. of our race die before they are one year old; thirty-seven per cent. before they are five years old; and nine-twentieths of the whole number born, die before reaching their fifteenth year.

But familiar as this form of bereavement is, the loss of a child in its early years is ordinarily one of the most sorrowful calamities that can overtake those whom God has permitted to enter into the parental relation. There is a peculiar poignancy in such a grief, as there certainly is a peculiar sadness in such a visitation of death. To see budding loveliness, with all its artless ways and its treasures of unfolded hopes, nipt in a night by the frosty touch of the destroyer — to witness the death-agonies of helpless, confiding, mutely-appealing innocence, without the power of relief — to commit to the dust in its feeble infancy the child upon whose strong arm and loving heart you had hoped to lean in the days of your own weakness and decay — this is more than a sad reversal of the order of nature; it is, to the sensitive and affectionate heart, one of the sharpest pangs it is capable of enduring.

And yet it must be added that there are also many peculiar sources of consolation opened to those who

are weeping over empty cradles and tenantless little beds. These little missed ones — O, *how* they are missed! — are, we believe, chosen lambs, gathered into the fold of the Good Shepherd; beauteous buds, and sweet, half-opened blossoms, transplanted from our chilling atmosphere into

> "those everlasting gardens,
> Where angels walk, and seraphs are the wardens;"

precious family jewels, rescued from a mean casket and an unsafe custody, and set as living stars in a crown of immortal beauty; glimmering germs of unschooled intelligence, expanded in a day by a heavenly magic into angel profundity, and perchance transformed into ministering spirits, to watch over the weary steps of their earthly guides, and to teach those who were once their teachers: —

> "How changed, dear friend, are thy part and thy child's!
> He bends over *thy* cradle now, or holds
> His warning finger out to be thy guide;
> Thou art the nursling now."

It is to minister such tender consolations as these to parents of children "passed into the skies," that the following collection of thoughts, suggested by the death of the young, has been made. May the soothing words of sympathy, the sweet and precious consolations, and the wise and gentle counsels, which are scattered over these pages, distil like heavenly dew upon many a bleeding heart, and help to allay those griefs with which the stranger may not intermeddle.

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OUR LITTLE ONES IN HEAVEN.

WHY WE BELIEVE IN INFANT SALVATION.*

At the outset, it must be admitted that the teachings of the Bible, in regard to the condition of those who die in infancy, are dim and uncertain. For wise ends, we doubt not, God has seen fit to give us no clear and direct revelation on this point, but has left us to settle the question by the slow and laborious process of inference and reason. Nor shall we be surprised at

* The following article, which is intended to give a general view of the grounds on which the Protestant Church has come to a common and united belief in the salvation of those who die in infancy, is compiled mainly from a sermon by Rev. Dr. Cumming, of London. The argument is an abridgment of the views of Rev. Dr. Russell, of Dundee, who, in 1823, published an "Essay on the Salvation of all Dying in Infancy," which is said to be one of the most full and satisfactory works ever written on this subject.

this, when we consider that the word of God is addressed only to intelligent and accountable beings — that it is eminently a practical book — and that infants, dying such, come not under its proclamation of duty, are not affected by its overtures of mercy, and therefore may not claim any special interest in its revelations. And yet it is universally admitted that so far as the Scriptures do cast any light upon this subject, it is the light of encouragement and hope.

The Argument from Infant Resurrection.

It will be admitted by all, that the bodies of infants will be raised at the resurrection morn. The language of Scripture is explicit — "I saw the dead, small and great," (that is, *infants* and *adults*) "stand before God;" "and the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them;" and "ALL that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of Man, and shall come forth." We must include in this mighty assemblage numbers of infants as well as adults. To this the apostle seems to allude, when he says, every one shall be raised "in his own order." The literal translation is, "in his own class;" infants in their class, adults in their class, males in their

class, females in their class — "every one in his own order."

Now, if the bodies of infants are to be raised, we may fairly inquire, what can be the purpose of thus raising their sleeping dust from its resting-places, and reuniting each infant soul to its body? It cannot be to be judged; for the judgment proceeds according to *works* done in the body, and infants have done no works. In every record of the judgment morn, the statement is, that it proceeds, not according to the *merit* of works. (far from that), but according to works as the manifestation of a principle of grace within. Infants, having had neither the opportunity nor the physical power of manifesting character by conduct, cannot be raised to be judged, as they are not just subjects of the judgment ordeal.

In the next place, infants cannot be raised to be condemned to everlasting punishment. Why? Because this is not a part of the original curse that was pronounced upon Adam. The curse pronounced upon Adam was, "Thou shalt surely die:" that is, the soul shall die, and the body shall die; and when the one is severed from the other, the penalty is exhausted. The punishment apportioned to them that have either rejected the overtures of the glorious

gospel, or stained their souls with sin and their hands with wickedness, can never be due to infants. They can be the subjects of the primitive curse only. But to raise their bodies again, and to reunite them to their souls in order to suffer, would be unjust, because it would be apportioning greater punishment than the original sentence contained. It would be the infliction of a doom severer than God pronounced in Paradise. God's truth never errs, in excess or shortcoming. Therefore, when infants are raised from the dead, they are raised *not to be judged*, for there are no works, according to which they can be judged; they are raised *not to suffer*, because this would be unjust, and exceeding the original sentence. What must, then, be the end? They are raised in order to be admitted into glory; that, reclothed with more glorious apparel than Adam lost, they may take their place in the midst of those, who have "washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

But this presumption amounts almost to certainty, if we bear in mind, that if infants' bodies are raised from the dead, then is there in this fact the actual removal of half the primeval curse; for its penalty was the death of soul and body, both. Now if we find it to be the fact

that the body is raised, which is the removal of half the curse, may we not, in full harmony with the presumptions of reason, and above all in full coincidence with the merciful genius of the gospel, infer that the other half of the curse is remitted also--that the soul and body shall be reunited, both together to inherit everlasting happiness?

We are also to connect with this fact the truth, that this resurrection of their bodies is the fruit of the atonement and resurrection of Christ—because if Christ had not died and risen again, there had been no resurrection; the very resurrection of the body is the result of the atonement of Christ, and in that sense, it extends to every man. Now if infants' bodies are raised from the dead, and this only through Christ's resurrection, and as the result of His perfect atonement, and if thus half the curse is remitted by the efficacy of the Saviour's blood, and by the virtues of His resurrection from the dead, may we not infer that the other half will be remitted also, and that soul and body will live and rejoice together in the presence of the Lord forever?

Infants Guiltless of the Great Condemning Sin.

With respect to those who are born amid the means of grace and opportunities of mercy, there is one only cause given in the gospel for their condemnation, namely, their wilful rejection of the gospel. "This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil." "He that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him." If, then, this be the great condemning sin, which consigns sinners to misery, it is clear that infants never committed that sin, because physically and morally incapable of it; and therefore infants, having not committed the only condemning sin, cannot and will not be ranked amid the condemned hereafter.

They will not be Judged by the Law.

Nor will it alter the conclusion if it be alleged that infants will be tried by the standard according to which the destinies of the heathen, who never heard the gospel, will be decided. The great apostle of the Gentiles says, "When the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having

not the law, are a law unto themselves, their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another." We have only to weigh the import of this phraseology to see its total inapplicability to infants. They can be accused neither of rejecting the gospel nor of violating the law. If grace cannot save them, which is not the case, we may be sure that works cannot condemn them.

God will not be less Merciful to Infants than to the Heathen.

If the heathen, who are "without the knowledge of the law, shall be judged without the law," or on principles different from those applied to such as "enjoy the law;" surely infants, who die previous to their possible knowledge of the gospel, shall not have its application to them measured by the rules of personal accountability. Having never "sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression," they will not be saved after the similitude of those of Adam's full-grown posterity, who have thus sinned. All objections to this conclusion arising from the incapacity of infants for salvation, are entirely presumptuous, since Christ has assured us that "of such," even infants in the arms, "is the kingdom of heaven." Now, as God is no respecter of persons, and as

all children are his moral offspring, and all are equally guilty, and equally incapable, by any possibility, of seeking deliverance from sin, we must conclude that all children, dying in infancy, are saved with an everlasting salvation, through the abounding grace of Christ Jesus, our Lord.

Infants Seemingly Incapable of being Lost.

Every picture we have of the place of misery implies, I think, that infants are incapable of being lost. This is a strong assertion, but it is a perfectly correct one. What is the Scripture picture of hell? It is men who have "sown to the flesh," "reaping corruption;" it is men who have sown iniquity, reaping punishment. It is "the worm that never dieth" — an accusing conscience — the fell agony of ceaseless remorse — the remembrance of rejected grace, of abused mercies, of rebellion against God, and of wrestling against conscience. These constitute "the worm that dieth not;" these make up and feed the flame of that "fire that is not quenched." But an infant is totally incapable of those poignant sufferings — those stings and agonies of remorse — because an infant never committed a single transgression. And therefore, as these

feelings of remorse are the main elements of hell, and as infants are by their very nature destitute of hell's chief element, they are incapable of suffering hell's dread punishment, so far, at least, as the nature of that punishment can be ascertained from the pages of the inspired volume.

They may be Saved without Faith.

It may be objected here, that throughout the Scriptures, salvation is invariably tied to faith. Unquestionably it is so; but it is of necessity with reference to those only who are capable of exercising faith. To require faith in infants, is to require a physical impossibility, and if faith, the instrument of salvation, is the free gift of God in the case of every adult, we may fairly presume that in the case of infants, where there is no ability to appreciate its nature or its object, God will bestow the end without it, and implant the principle of a living and everlasting faith. He can work with, or without, or against, means, when his own high purposes demand it.

God's Triumph over Satan seems to Imply the Salvation of Infants.

It would appear that one leading object contemplated by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, is the destruction and depression of Satan, and that, too, by a demonstration that not one particle of his malignant policy and prospects has been, or will be, secured.

Now it does seem, if infants are not universally saved, that Satan hath got nearly as much as he hoped to achieve of triumph over God. It is evident that Satan's policy, when he seduced Adam and Eve, was meant, either, on the one hand, to force God to destroy this world, in which His smiles gave beauty to every blossom, and His breath gave fragrance to every flower, and all of which He himself had pronounced to be "very good;" or, on the other hand, to lead God to pronounce one universal and indiscriminate amnesty upon every creature that had transgressed, — thereby unhinging His moral government, conniving at crime, and compromising the claims of holiness and truth. These were the two extremes, either of which Satan made sure of achieving; but the atonement is the unexpected solution of the difficulty, — the great cause of the lesson being inscribed

in heaven, and legible on earth at the moment that the chiefest of sinners are saved — "The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life." But if infants are lost, they are lost because of their connection with the first Adam, and therefore in that respect Satan has triumphed; nay, if this be true, half the human race, by Satan's policy, and without their personal guilt, are lost.

Infants, however, are not lost. We know that none shall perish, but those that reject the cure; none shall inherit the serpent's curse, except those that imbibe the serpent's spirit. And on the other hand, those who are saved, it is declared expressly, in Scripture, are saved only through the mediation of Jesus, by reason of the transcendent goodness that gave Christ to die for the sins of mankind, and therefore by a way of salvation which does not tarnish the glory of God. Neither shall man be lost, nor the world destroyed, nor God dishonored, by the policy of Satan. The reverse shall be the triumphant issue. We justly infer that the sum total of this dispensation will be, that not one soul shall be lost because of Satan's success in Paradise, but that, on the contrary, his apparent triumph shall be overruled by Infinite Wisdom to be the means of bringing many sons to a greater hap-

pincss, and of giving greater glory to God. They that perish, perish by their rejection of life, not by their inheritance of Adam's sin.

An Inspired Intimation of Infant Salvation.

In the eighth Psalm we have an express scriptural proof of the salvation of infants, and an unequivocal intimation that amid the multitudes that shall grace the triumphs of the Son of God, infants will not be wanting: "O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is Thy name in all the earth! who hast set Thy glory above the heavens. Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast Thou ordained strength, because of Thine enemies, that Thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger." Now the apostle Paul, in reasoning upon this very Psalm in his epistle to the Hebrews, quotes it as descriptive of Christ in the days of His final triumph. It is in the second chapter. "But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man, that Thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that Thou visitest him? Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; Thou crownedst him with glory and honor, and didst set him over the works of Thy hands; Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that He put all in subjection

under him, He left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him. But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man." The sacred penman states that the Psalm refers to that period when Christ shall reign from sea to sea — all rebellious elements being laid prostrate, and creation clothed afresh with holiness, and beauty, and bliss. Amid the anthem-peal of praise that rises up to Him from the redeemed earth, the psalmist hears the songs of infants as no weak tone in the rich diapason, as ascriptions to the Lamb "out of the mouth of babes and sucklings." Yes, the beautiful truth stands forth in all its lustre, deep and consolatory, that the sweetest hymns which shall be heard in the millennial era, will be infant hymns; that amid the songs that rise before the throne, will be melodies that are warbled by infant orphans' tongues, and that gush forth from full infant hearts. The unspeakably precious truth comes home from this to every parent, that, if a saint of God, he shall join in the songs of heaven with his departed infants, who have already caught the key-note.

The Doctrine Inferred from the Great Multitude of the Redeemed.

On no other ground, we may also observe, than on that of the universal safety of deceased infants, can we account for the vast multitudes declared to be ultimately saved. The various expressions used in Scripture respecting the final salvation of men, unquestionably imply that a very great number will be eternally saved. "After this I beheld, and lo, A GREAT MULTITUDE, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb." "A GREAT MULTITUDE which no man can number" is the characteristic of the finally saved; showing that it is not a minority, but a majority, that shall ultimately be admitted to glory. Christ, in numbers, as in glory, shall have the pre-eminence. In the nineteenth of Revelation, again, we read, "And I heard as it were the voice of a *great multitude*, and as the voice of many waters:" another expression denoting the vast number of the saved. This is a sweet and

majestic thought. The great multitude will not be lost. The prospect dilates the heart of philanthropy, and comes home to us clothed with the attributes and glories of God.

David's Assurance of his Dead Child's Salvation.

There is at least one Scriptural text that seems to expressly assert the safety of dead infants. We allude to the declaration at the close of the beautiful passage descriptive of David's feelings on the loss of his infant, recorded in 2 Samuel 12: 15 – 23.* "I SHALL GO TO HIM," said David, "but he shall not return to me." If ever there was a case where the infant might be expected to suffer hereafter for the father's sin, it was that of David in this passage. Yet David's conviction of his own sin, expressed so poignantly in the fifty-first Psalm, and anxiety about his own spiritual safety, did not cloud his assurance of the safety of this babe. He believed he should meet him in that purer and better land whither he had gone before him.

* The passage is quoted in full on p. 33.

Of Such is the Kingdom of Heaven.

Our Saviour has said, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven." This passage, taken in its plain and literal sense, seems to teach that not only are there infants in heaven, but that the greater portion of the redeemed belong to this class. The expression, "of such is the kingdom of heaven," means, that "of such it is in a great measure made up," because they will form a very great portion of the redeemed family of heaven. The Saviour appears to have had the universal salvation of all who die in infancy in his view. His reasoning is not, "of persons resembling such in temper and disposition is the kingdom made up," for this would not warrant the conclusion drawn, namely, that children ought not to be hindered from being brought to Him, in order to be blessed, for on the same principle he might have said, "suffer doves and lambs to be brought unto me to be blessed, for of persons resembling such is the kingdom of God made up." Now, this would prove too much; consequently it proves nothing. His words, then, must respect children liter-

ally; and his blessing such ensures their salvation. Nor can the words be construed to respect only the particular children then brought to Him, or any particular class of children exclusively, for the expression, "of such," is comprehensive of all who never get beyond the condition of infancy.

Again, our Saviour often calls his adult believers "little ones," and "little children." But there would be a manifest impropriety in thus denominating believers, if it were not true that "little children," and "little ones," may be subjects of salvation.

A Comforting Promise for Bereaved Parents.

"Thus said the Lord, a voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation, and bitter weeping; Rachel weeping for her children, refused to be comforted for her children, because they were not. Thus saith the Lord, refrain thy voice from weeping, and thine eyes from tears: for thy work shall be rewarded, saith the Lord; and they shall come again from the land of the enemy. And there is hope in thine end, saith the Lord, that thy children shall come again to their own border." — Jer. 31 : 15–17.

That the subjects of this prediction are lit-

tle children, is proved by the quotation of this scripture in Matthew's gospel, and its application to those of "two years old and under" that were slain by Herod: "Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently inquired of the wise men. Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, In Ramah was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not." — Matt. 2: 16–18.

The only "land of the enemy" from which these children could come, is the land of death, "the last enemy" the saved will encounter. As the resurrection and salvation of Herod's innocents are thus affirmed, it follows that all of like age will also be saved. And hence the word of comfort uttered to Rachel, may be laid hold of by all parents bereaved of infants, as applicable to themselves.

Infant Salvation Inferred from the Abundant Provisions of Grace.

The abundant provision which Christ has made for the redemption of our fallen race, encourages us to believe that those shall be partakers of "the free gift" who die before they are capable of deliberately rejecting it. Jesus is "the Saviour of the world." He "gave himself a ransom for all." He "tasted death for every man;" "and He is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." In the fifth chapter of Paul's Epistle to the Romans, there is a chain of reasoning on this point, which seems to lead to the inevitable conclusion that the infantile dead are included in the provisions of mercy. The apostle argues that the glory of Christ's work is more illustriously displayed in overcoming the accumulated effects of the many personal offences of actual transgressors, than in simply overcoming those of the single offence of Adam. He takes for granted the redemption of those who had "not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression," when reasoning on the transcendent grandeur of the plan of mercy, as embracing the remission of "the many offences" of actual

transgressors. On the full glory of the plan, as thus most impressively exhibited, he delighted to dwell, and what he says of the circumstances of infants, is introduced chiefly for the sake of illustrating this higher manifestation of "the exceeding riches" of divine grace. In arguing for the greater, he takes for granted the less. He cannot but be considered as teaching us, that the scheme of redemption shields from the penal consequences of Adam's sin, separately viewed, or where they are not connected with actual sin and final impenitence, seeing he maintains that its object extends, not to this only, but much further. We infer, therefore, that, under the present dispensation, no exclusion occurs, where nothing additional to the sin of Adam has taken place, since all obstructions in the way of the honorable exercise of mercy and grace have been completely removed, by the infinitely precious sacrifice of Christ. "For if through the offence of one many be dead, MUCH MORE the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath ABOUNDED unto many." "But where sin abounded, GRACE DID MUCH MORE ABOUND."

THE REAPER.

THERE is a Reaper, whose name is Death,
And, with his sickle keen
He reaps the bearded grain at a breath,
And the flowers that grow between.

"Shall I have nought that is fair," saith he;
"Have nought but the bearded grain?
Though the breath of these flowers is sweet to me,
I will give them all back again."

He gazed at the flowers with tearful eyes,
He kissed their drooping leaves:
It was for the Lord of Paradise,
He bound them in his sheaves.

"My Lord has need of these flowerets gay,"
The Reaper said, and smiled.
"Dear tokens of the earth are they,
Where he was once a child.

"They shall all bloom in fields of light,
Transplanted by my care,
And saints, upon their garments white,
These sacred blossoms wear."

And the mother gave, in tears and pain,
The flowers she most did love;
She knew she should find them all again
In the fields of light above.

O, not in cruelty, not in wrath,
The Reaper came that day;
'T was an angel visited the green earth
And took the flowers away.

LONGFELLOW.

THE WANDERER RECLAIMED.

A shepherd long had sought in vain
To call a wandering sheep:
He strove to make its pathway plain
Through dangers thick and deep.

But yet the wanderer stood aloof,
And still refused to come;
Nor would she ever hear reproof,
Or turn to seek her home.

At last the gentle shepherd took
Her little lamb from view!
The mother gazed with anguished look,
She turned — and followed too!

DEATH OF THE FIRST BORN.

YOUNG mother, he is gone!
His dimpled cheek no more will touch thy breast;
No more the music-tone
Float from his lips, to thine all fondly pressed;
His smiles and happy laugh are lost to thee:
Earth must his mother and his pillow be.

His was the morning hour,
And he hath passed in beauty from the day,
A bud, not yet a flower,
Torn, in its sweetness, from the parent spray;
The death-wind swept him to his soft repose,
As frost, in spring-time, blights the early rose.

Never on earth again
Will his rich accents charm thy listening ear,
Like some Æolian strain,
Breathing at eventide serene and clear;
His voice is choked in dust, and on his eyes
The unbroken seal of peace and silence lies.

And from thy yearning heart,
Whose inmost core was warm with love for him,
A gladness must depart,
And those kind eyes with many tears be dim;

While lonely memories, an unceasing train,
Will turn the raptures of the past to pain.

Yet, mourner, while the day
Rolls like the darkness of a funeral by,
And hope forbids one ray
To stream athwart the grief-discolored sky,
There breaks upon thy sorrow's evening gloom
A trembling lustre from beyond the tomb.

'T is from the better land!
There, bathed in radiance that around them springs,
Thy loved one's wings expand;
As with the choiring cherubim he sings,
And all the glory of that God can see,
Who said, on earth, to children, "Come to me."

Mother, thy child is blessed;
And though his presence may be lost to thee,
And vacant leave thy breast,
And missed, a sweet load from thy parent knee;
Though tones familiar from thine ear have passed,
Thou 'lt meet thy first-born with his Lord at last.

WILLIS GAYLORD CLARK.

THE DEATH OF DAVID'S CHILD.

And the Lord struck the child that Uriah's wife bare unto David, and it was very sick. David therefore besought God for the child; and David fasted, and went in, and lay all night upon the earth. And the elders of his house arose, and went to him, to raise him up from the earth: but he would not, neither did he eat bread with them.

And it came to pass on the seventh day, that the child died. And the servants of David feared to tell him that the child was dead: for they said, "Behold, while the child was yet alive, we spake unto him, and he would not hearken unto our voice: how will he then vex himself, if we tell him that the child is dead?"

But when David saw that his servants whispered, David perceived that the child was dead: therefore David said unto his servants, "Is the child dead?" And they said, "He is dead." Then David arose from the earth, and washed, and anointed himself, and changed his apparel, and came into the house of the Lord, and worshipped: then he came to his own house; and when he required, they set bread before him, and he did eat.

Then said his servants unto him, "What

thing is this that thou has done? thou didst fast and weep for the child, while it was alive; but when the child was dead, thou didst rise and eat bread." And he said, "While the child was yet alive, I fasted and wept: for I said, 'Who can tell whether God will be gracious to me, that the child may live?' But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me."—*Second Book of Samuel.*

A SHORT LIFE MAY BE A PERFECT ONE

It is not growing like a tree
In bulk, doth make man better be,
Or standing long an oak, three hundred year,
To fall a log at last, dry, bald, and sear.
A lily of a day
Is fairer far, in May,
Although it fall and die that night,
It was the plant and flower of light!
In small proportions we just beauties see:
And in short measures life may perfect be

BEN JONSON.

THE MOTHER'S SACRIFICE.

"WHAT shall I render Thee, Father Supreme,
For thy rich gifts, and this the best of all?"
Said the young mother, as she fondly watched
Her sleeping babe. There was an answering voice
That night in dreams: —
"Thou hast a tender flower
Upon thy breast — fed with the dews of love:
Send me that flower. Such flowers there are in heaven."
But there was silence. Yea, a hush so deep,
Breathless and terror-stricken, that the lip
Blanched in its trance.
"Thou hast a little harp, —
How sweetly would it swell the angel's hymn!
Yield me that harp."
There rose a shuddering sob,
As if the bosom by some hidden sword
Was cleft in twain.
Morn came — a blight had found
The crimson velvet of the unfolding bud,
The harp-strings rang a thrilling strain, and broke —
And that young mother lay upon the earth
In childless agony. Again the voice
That stirred her vision:

"He who asked of thee,
Loveth a cheerful giver." So she raised
Her gushing eyes, and, ere the tear-drop dried
Upon its fringes, smiled — and that meek smile,
Like Abraham's faith, was counted righteousness.

MRS. L. H. SIGOURNEY

TWO ON EARTH AND TWO IN HEAVEN.

Two on earth, their little feet
Glance like sunbeams round the door;
Two in heaven, whose lips repeat
Words of blessings evermore.

Two on earth, at shut of day,
Softly sink to cradled rest;
Two in heaven, more blessed than they,
Slumber on the Saviour's breast.

Two with crowns of budding flowers
Dance the summer skies beneath;
Two in heaven's unfading bowers
Wear the glory like a wreath.

Two on earth, whose merry call
Stirs my heart to gladness now;
Two in heaven, whose kisses fall
Through the silence on my brow.

Two on earth, O, day by day,
Kneeling at my Father's throne,
Thus with pleading heart I pray,
"Shepherd, make my lambs thy own!"

Two within that sweeter home
Have no need of earthly prayer;
There with angel songs they roam
Through the pastures green and fair.

Oft I gaze with tearful eyes,
Where the church-yard daisies blow;
Oft my prayers are only sighs,
Yearning for my children so.

Yet I know the Shepherd's hand
Led them home in tender love;
Mine is sure a blessed band,
Two on earth and two above.

EMILY C. HUNTINGDON.

THE MEETING.

O! WHEN a mother meets on high,
The child she lost in infancy,
Hath she not then for pains and fears,
The day of woe, the watchful night,
For all her sorrows, all her tears,
An over payment of delight?

THE LOSS OF A LITTLE CHILD.

O! SAY not 't were a keener blow
To lose a child of riper years,
You cannot feel a mother's woe,
You cannot dry a mother's tears:
The girl who rears a sickly plant,
Or cherishes a wounded dove,
Will love them most while most they want
The watchfulness of love!

Time *must* have changed that fair young brow!
Time *might* have changed that spotless heart!
Years *might* have taught deceit — but now
In love's confiding dawn we part!
Ere pain or grief had wrought decay,
My babe is cradled in the tomb;
Like some fair blossom torn away
Before its perfect bloom.

With thoughts of peril and of storm,
We see a bark first touch the wave;
But distant seems the whirlwind's form,
As distant — as an infant's grave!
Though all is calm, that beauteous ship
Must brave the whirlwind's rudest breath;
Though all is calm, that infant's lip
Must meet the kiss of death!

THOMAS HAYNES BAYLY.

A BEREAVED FATHER'S ASSURANCE.

LIKE you, my friend, I have been called to witness the unexpected departure of my children. Two of them I committed to the same grave, where they sleep the sleep of death. They were growing up together like two young flowers, which had intertwined their tendrils, and mingled their sweet fragrance, but which were suddenly withered by the same rude blast. Like them, these children were lovely in their lives, and in death they were not divided. The same storm overwhelmed them both. They lie, as it were, arm in arm, and side by side, in the same deep and narrow bed of earth, until they awake in the morning of the resurrection. Nor do they lie alone; their narrow bed has been uncovered to receive another sleeper, the victim of a similar malady, whose sun of brightest promise went down while my heart was still rejoicing in the beauty of its day-spring.

It was when tossed upon that sea of trouble in which these sudden visitations involved me, I was led to the full investigation of the question of the salvation of infants. That examination more than confirmed my hopes. It strengthened them into A COMFORTABLE ASSURANCE

THAT IN THE DEATH OF INFANTS, IT IS WELL WITH THEM, AND WELL WITH THEIR PARENTS — that God's purposes are merciful to both — and that while he glorifies himself in the exaltation of the children to heaven, he would also secure by such afflictions the sanctification and the salvation of their parents. — *Rev. Dr. Smyth's Solace for Bereaved Parents.*

BEREAVEMENT.

NAY, weep not, dearest, though the child be dead,
He lives again in heaven's unclouded life,
With other angels that have early fled
From these dark scenes of sorrow, sin, and strife;
Nay, weep not, dearest, though thy yearning love
Would fondly keep for earth its fairest flowers,
And e'en deny to brighter realms above
The few that deck this dreary world of ours:
Though much it seems a wonder and a wo
That one so loved should be so early lost,
And hallowed tears may unforbidden flow
To mourn the blossom that we cherished most:
Yet all is well; God's good design I see,
That where our treasure is, our hearts may be!

J. G. SAXE.

BABY'S SHOES.

O, THOSE little, those little blue shoes!
Those shoes that no little feet use!
O, the price were high
That those shoes would buy,
Those little blue unused shoes!

For they hold the small shape of feet
That no more their mother's eyes meet,
That, by God's good will,
Years since grew still,
And ceased from their totter so sweet!

And O, since that baby slept,
So hushed, how the mother has kept,
With a tearful pleasure,
That dear little treasure,
And over them thought and wept!

For they mind her for evermore
Of a patter along the floor;
And blue eyes she sees
Look up from her knees
With the look that in life they wore.

As they lie before her there,
There babbles from chair to chair,

A little sweet face
That 's a gleam in the place,
With its little gold curls of hair.

Then, O, wonder not that her heart
From all else would rather part
Than those tiny blue shoes
That no little feet use,
And whose sight makes such fond tears start.

W. C. BENNETT.

WE ARE SEVEN.

——— A SIMPLE child,
That lightly draws its breath,
And feels its life in every limb,
What should it know of death?

I met a little cottage girl;
She was eight years old, she said;
Her hair was thick with many a curl
That clustered round her head.

She had a rustic, woodland air,
And she was wildly clad;
Her eyes were fair, and very fair,
Her beauty made me glad.

"Sisters and brothers, little maid,
How many may you be?"
"How many? — Seven in all," she said,
And wondering looked at me.

"And who are they? I pray you, tell."
She answered, "Seven are we;
And two of us at Conway dwell,
And two are gone to sea.

"Two of us in the churchyard lie,
My sister and my brother;
And in the churchyard cottage, I
Dwell near them with my mother."

"You say that two at Conway dwell,
And two are gone to sea,
Yet ye are seven! — I pray you tell.
Sweet maid, how this may be."

Then did the little maid reply,
"Seven boys and girls are we:
Two of us in the churchyard lie,
Beneath the churchyard tree."

"You run about, my little maid,
Your limbs they are alive;
If two are in the churchyard laid,
Then ye are only five."

"Their graves are green, they may be seen,"
The little maid replied,
"Twelve steps or more from my mother's door
And they are side by side.

"My stockings there I often knit,
My kerchief there I hem;
And there upon the ground I sit,
And sing a song to them.

"And often after sunset, sir,
When it is light and fair,
I take my little porringer,
And eat my supper there.

"The first that died was sister Jane;
In bed she moaning lay,
Till God released her of her pain;
And then she went away.

"So in the churchyard she was laid;
And when the grass was dry,
Together round her grave we played,
My brother John and I.

"And when the ground was white with snow,
And I could run and slide,
My brother John was forced to go,
And he lies by her side."

"How many are you, then," said I,
"If they two are in heaven?"
Quick was the little maid's reply,
"O, master! we are seven."

"But they are dead; those two are dead.
Their spirits are in heaven!"
'T was throwing words away: for still
The little maid would have her will,
And said, "Nay, we are seven!"

WORDSWORTH.

ON THE DEATH OF AN INFANT.

So fades the lovely, blooming flower,
Frail, smiling solace of an hour;
So soon our transient comforts fly,
And pleasure only blooms to die.

Is there no kind, no healing art,
To soothe the anguish of the heart?
Spirit of grace, be ever nigh:
Thy comforts are not made to die.

See gentle patience smile on pain,
Till dying hope revives again;
Hope wipes the tear from sorrow's eye,
And faith points upward to the sky.

STEELE.

THE CRUSHED BUD.

One little bud adorned my bower,
And shed sweet fragrance round;
It grew in beauty, hour by hour,
Till, ah! the spoiler came in power,
And crushed it to the ground.

Yet not forever in the dust
That beauteous bud shall lie;
No! — in the garden of the just,
Beneath God's glorious eye, we trust,
'T will bloom again on high.

THE GATHERED BUD.

Have we not knelt beside his bed,
And watched our first-born blossom die?
Hoped, till the shade of hope had fled,
Then wept till feeling's fount was dry?
Was it not sweet in that dark hour,
To think, 'mid mutual tears and sighs,
Our bud had left its earthly bower,
And burst to bloom in Paradise?

Alaric A. Watts.

SENTENCES FROM THE SCRIPTURES.

It is the Lord: let Him do what seemeth Him good.

I was dumb, I opened not my mouth; because Thou didst it.

The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.

Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble. He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not.

As for man, his days are as grass: as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth. For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more.

Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.

There the wicked cease from troubling; and there the weary be at rest.

For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

Is it well with the child? And she answered, It is well.

O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and He shall sustain thee.

But though He cause grief, yet will He have compassion according to the multitude of His mercies. For He doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men.

In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer.

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

Blessed is the man whom Thou chastenest, O Lord, and teachest him out of Thy law.

It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn Thy statutes.

For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

MIDNIGHT.

FAR off the clocks are striking,
'T is midnight's deepest shade,
The lamp but feebly glimmers, —
Thy little bed is made.

Around the house go mourning
The winds so drearily;
Within we sit in silence,
And listen, as for thee.

Dreaming that we shall hear thee
Knock softly at the door,
Aweary with the wandering,
Glad to return once more.

Poor fools! thus to dissemble!
The fond hope will not stay;
We wake and feel too surely
Thy home is far away.

FROM THE GERMAN OF EICHENDORFF.

MOTHER, WHAT IS DEATH?

"MOTHER, how still the baby lies!
I cannot hear his breath;
I cannot see his laughing eyes —
They tell me this is death.

"My little work I thought to bring,
And sat down by his bed,
And pleasantly I tried to sing —
They hushed me — he is dead.

"They say that he again will rise,
More beautiful than now;
That God will bless him in the skies —
O, mother, tell me how?"

"Daughter, do you remember, dear,
The cold, dark thing you brought,
And laid upon the casement here, —
A withered worm, you thought?

"I told you that Almighty power
Could break that withered shell,
And show you, in a future hour,
Something would please you well.

"Look at the chrysalis, my love, —
An empty shell it lies;
Now raise your wondering glance above,
To where yon insect flies!"

"O yes, mamma! how very gay
Its wings of starry gold!
And see! it lightly flies away
Beyond my gentle hold.

"O, mother, now I know full well,
If God that worm can change,
And draw it from this broken cell,
On golden wings to range, —

"How beautiful will brother be,
When God shall give *him* wings,
Above this dying world to flee,
And live with heavenly things!"

CAROLINE GILMAN.

LOVE.

GOD gives us love. Sometimes to love
He *lends* us; but when love has grown
To ripeness, that on which it throve
Falls off, and love is left alone.

TENNYSON.

EVA.

Dry thy tears for holy Eva,
With the blessed angels leave her;
Of the form so soft and fair,
Give to earth the tender care.

In the better home of Eva
Let the shining ones receive her,
With the welcome voiced psalm,
Harp of gold and waving palm!

All is light and peace with Eva;
There the darkness cometh never;
Tears are wiped and fetters fall,
And the Lord is all in all.

Weep no more for happy Eva,
Wrong and sin no more shall grieve her,
Care and pain and weariness,
Lost in love so measureless.

Gentle Eva, loving Eva,
Child confessor, true believer,
Listener at the Master's knee,
"Suffer such to come to me."

O for faith like thee, sweet Eva,
Lighting all the solemn river,
And the blessings of the poor,
Wafting to the heavenly shore.

JOHN G. WHITTIER.

HEAVEN.

WHY, day by day, this painful questioning?
I know that it is well. I know that *there*
(*O where?*) thou hast protectors, guardians, friends,
If such be needed: angel companies
Move round thee: mighty spirits lead thy thoughts
To founts of knowledge which we never saw.
I know that thou art happy — fresh desire
Springing each day, and each day satisfied!
God's glorious works all open to thy view.
His blessed creatures thine, where pain nor death
Disturbs not nor divides. All this I know —
But O, for one short sight of what I know!

ALFORD.

SEVEN YEARS IN HEAVEN.

He has been there seven years! A week of years: Sabbaths all, and holy, happy days, have made up the years that glide away unmarked by change of scene or season, in that land where there is no night, no cold, but "sacred, high, eternal noon."

Year after year rolls slowly away on earth, and lengthens the long interval over which we look, to the time when he was with us here. We have grown old since we saw him. But the memory of our first buried babe is as fresh and green as the grass was on his little grave when last we watered it with tears.

He has not grown old. "They only who have lost a child in infancy are sure of a babe forever." They do not grow old in heaven. They grow in knowledge and holiness and happiness. But there is no succession of time in eternity. When we think of one having been "seven years in heaven," we think of the time that has past with us without him. He is conscious of no successive years in that world where there is no sun nor moon: nor stars, but in the crown of Him who is the light of heaven.

Years belong to us; and they have been long and wearisome since he went to his Father's house on high. He was the light of our house, "a well-spring of pleasure;" a joy and solace; bright, beautiful, blessing and blest; and when he died, our hearts died with him, or lived only to bleed on year after year, each passing one being marked by this memorial, this returning anniversary of our dear child's death. Our hearts do live: for they yearn after that buried boy with longing that no language can express; they bleed as if the wound was of yesterday; they ache when we think of him, (and when can we not think of him?) we mourn like Rachel, and the sorrow seems no lighter, no less, than it did seven years ago. I think it is a heavier sorrow, a sorer pain to bear. I have shed more tears for him this seventh year of grief, than in any former year of the seven. He would have been ten years old had he lived with us until now! He might have been as good in his youth, as he was lovely in his infancy; and then what a glorious being he would have been, now standing by my side as I write these words in sadness to his memory, or sitting here and reading of heaven, and talking to me of the world above the skies.

What a glorious being, did I say, he would

have been? Rather let me say, what a glorious being is he now! Seven years there have been more and better than seventy times seven thousand years on earth. I know it. God help me to admit that it is better far, for him, for me, for all, that he should have spent them there than here. For what attainments must that soul have made that for these seven years past has been pursuing the career of heavenly study — the mysteries of celestial learning and celestial love! I do not know whether he prefers to be with seraphs or cherubim: the former are said to love and the latter to know the more. I think that he wanders with both, and finds congenial spirits in John and Paul. He has been seven years with them, and with the Saviour who took him to his arms from ours. Now he must be far advanced in knowledge and in holiness. With such companions, such instructors, how wise and good he must be! If he should come back to us, he could find no company with whom he would be at home. Within the last year, one whom he revered and loved, his aged grandsire, has gone to heaven. The child has welcomed him there: taken him by the hand, and led him to fountains of living waters, and charmed his ear with heavenly melodies, and become his teacher in

the things of the kingdom. It must be brighter and sweeter now for both, that they can sit together in heavenly places, and speak of the wonders of earth and heaven, as they now appear to their opened eyes. Sixty years were between them when they were here together: there the child had seven years the start of his grandsire, and leads him upward to the sources of Infinite wisdom and love. I should be glad to see them there. I should have been glad to see them when they met in the streets of the New Jerusalem! to have heard the cry of joy from the child, as he flew into the patriarch's bosom, and hung on his breast, and kissed his brow with glory crowned.

Well, we shall all be there soon. Thank God for that. A few more days of darkness and the morning cometh, the morning of eternal day.

> "Then let our songs abound,
> And every tear be dry;
> We 're marching through Immanuel's ground,
> To fairer worlds on high."

This shall be the last time that we will keep the anniversary of our child's release from earth with mourning. Thanks be unto God who giveth us the victory over death; not our own

death only, for that is one of the least of trials; but over the death of those we love; causing us to triumph in tribulation; so that we can say, The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.

REV. SAMUEL IRENÆUS PRIME.

THE MOURNING MOTHER.

O! WHO shall tell what fearful pangs
That mother's heart are rending,
As o'er her infant's little grave
Her wasted form is bending;
From many an eye that weeps to-day,
Delight may beam to-morrow;
But she — her precious babe is not;
And what remains but sorrow?

Bereaved one! I may not chide
Thy tears and bitter sobbing, —
Weep on! 't will cool that burning brow,
And still that bosom's throbbing:
But be not thine such grief as theirs,
To whom no hope is given, —
Snatched from the world, its sins and snares,
Thy infant rests in heaven.

BISHOP DOANE.

ON THE DEATH OF A SON.

I NEVER trusted to have lived
To bid farewell to thee,
And almost said, in agony,
It ought not so to be;
I hoped that thou within the grave
My weary head shouldst lay,
And live, beloved, when I was gone,
For many a happy day.

With trembling hand I vainly tried
Thy dying eyes to close;
And almost envied, in that hour,
Thy calm and deep repose;
For I was left in loneliness,
With pain and grief oppressed,
And thou wast with the sainted,
Where the weary are at rest.

Yes, I am sad and weary now;
But let me not repine,
Because a spirit, loved so well,
Is earlier blessed than mine;
My faith may darken as it will,
I shall not much deplore,
Since *thou art where the ills of life*
Can never reach thee more.

W. B. O. PEABODY.

THE LITTLE COFFIN.

'T WAS a tiny, rosewood thing,
Ebon bound, and glittering
With its stars of silver white,
Silver tablet, blank and bright,
Downy pillowed, satin lined,
That I, loitering, chanced to find
Mid the dust, and scent and gloom
Of the undertaker's room,
Waiting, empty — ah! for whom?

Ah! what love-watched cradle bed
Keeps to-night the nestling head,
Or on what soft, pillowing breast
Is the cherub form at rest,
That ere long, with darkened eye,
Sleeping to no lullaby,
Whitely robed, and still, and cold,
Pale flowers slipping from its hold,
Shall this dainty couch enfold?

Ah! what bitter tears shall stain
All this satin sheet like rain,
And what towering hopes be hid
'Neath this tiny coffin lid,
Scarcely large enough to bear
Little words that must be there,

Little words, cut deep and true,
Bleeding mothers' hearts anew —
Sweet, pet name, and "AGED TWO!"

Oh! can sorrow's hovering plume,
Round our pathway cast a gloom,
Chill and darksome as the shade
By an infant's coffin made?
From our arms an angel flies,
And our startled, dazzled eyes,
Weeping round its vacant place,
Cannot rise its path to trace,
Cannot see the angel face!

MRS. H. L. BOSTWICK.

THE LILY.

SOME, a similitude to childhood see,
In vines which cling to a deep-rooted tree;
Some, in the rosebud infancy perceive,
The bloom of beauty ushered from its leaves;
The vine a serpent's covert may enclose,
And thorns, deep piercing, lie beneath the rose.
She was the lily, type of purity,
Swept by death's tide to glory's waveless sea,
And then replanted by an angel hand,
Bloomed in the gardens of the upper land.

JOHN J. MORRIS.

THE INFANT HOST IN HEAVEN

In view of the character of God, the priesthood of Jesus Christ, and the slight intimations of holy writ, we may rest in a comfortable assurance that all departed infants are made spiritually and forever alive; that "As in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive." "There is hope in their end, saith the Lord, that thy children shall come again to their own border." "Moreover, your little ones, which ye said should be a prey, and your children, which in that day had no knowledge between good and evil, they shall go in thither, and unto them will I give it, and they shall possess it."

Our thoughts mount at once, delightfully and gratefully, to our Father's house, where are many mansions; and we understand better why in that blissful abode there is such an exceeding great multitude, which no man can number. "For of such — of such more numerously than all others — is the kingdom of God." "These were redeemed from among men, being the first fruits unto God and the Lamb." It is estimated that, of all born into this world, one half leave it in infancy. If such be the case, then, according to a computation which makes the whole

race thus far to number twenty-eight thousand millions, there would be at this moment fourteen thousand millions in heaven who were infants when they went there. Whatever may be thought of the probable correctness of this estimate, the field thus opened for joyful contemplation is immense, and as enrapturing as immense. How many times must we multiply the present population of our globe to make it equal the host which has already gone to the regions of bliss! How many more will at last be found to be saved than lost! How will the glory of God shine in the recovery by the second Adam, so much more ample than the ruin by the first! How is Satan baffled in his most malicious plans, and our Redeemer divinely victorious!

* * * * * * * *

Alas, for Herod! not for the martyrs of Bethlehem! alas, for the persecuting pontiffs and monarchs! not for their infant victims; alas, for the mother on the banks of the Ganges! not for her offspring afloat on its waters;—alas, for them, that they did not themselves perish in earliest infancy! "Is it well with the child? It is well." "I shall go to him;" and I shall there find him a cherub, his voice joining clear and sweet in the choir of heaven; all his earthly

beauty, all his infant loveliness, ripened into the perfected excellence of heaven.

"Look upward, and your child you'll see,
Fixed in his blest abode;
Who would not, therefore, childless be,
To give a child to God?"

REV. A. C. THOMPSON.

THE STONE ROLLED FROM THE TOMB.

As vernal flowers that scent the morn,
But wither in the rising day,
Thus lovely was this infant's dawn,
Thus swiftly fled his life away.

He died before his infant soul
Had ever burnt with wrong desires—
Had ever spurned at Heaven's control,
Or ever quenched its sacred fires.

He died to sin; he died to care;
But for a moment felt the rod;
Then, rising on the viewless air,
Spread his light wings, and soared to God.

This blessed theme now cheers my voice;
The grave is not the loved one's prison;
The "stone" that covered half my joys
Is "rolled away," and, lo! "he's risen."

LITTLE MARY.

FROM the group of little faces
One is gone —
In the old familiar places,
Sad and lone,
Father, mother, meek-eyed brother,
Sit and moan;

Sit and moan for one departed,
Pure and mild,
Little Mary, gentle-hearted,
Sinless child —
And as nestling memories thicken,
Griefs grow wild.

Home once bright, how cold and dreary!
Shadows deep
Fall on forms and hearts a-weary,
Eyes that weep —
Thought is in the church-yard, seeking
One asleep.

Still the merry laugh deceiving
Fills the ear,
Tiny arms, yet fondly cleaving,
Dry the tear;
Footfalls, silvery footfalls patter
Far and near.

Ears instinctive pause to hearken,
All in vain —
Days drag on and skies shall darken
O'er with pain ;
But the heart will find its lost one
Ne'er again.

From the treasured fire-side faces
Here to-day,
From the tender, warm embraces
Dropped away,
Sleeps she midst forgotten sleepers
In the clay.

Ah ! what weary numbers sighing
To be free,
Little Mary, would be lying
Low with thee !
Where no care nor eating sorrow
E'er shall be.

Weep not when ye tell the story
Of the dead —
'T is a sunbeam joined the glory
Overhead !
" For of such sweet babes is heaven,"
Jesus said.

AGAINST EXCESSIVE GRIEF.*

I KNOW no duty in religion more generally agreed on, nor more justly required by God Almighty, than a perfect submission to His will in all things; nor do I think any disposition of mind can either please Him more, or become us better, than that of being satisfied with all He gives, and contented with all He takes away. None, I am sure, can be of more honor to God, nor of more ease to ourselves. For, if we consider Him as our Maker, we cannot contend with Him; if as our Father, we ought not to distrust Him; so that we may be confident, whatever He does is intended for good; and whatever happens that we interpret otherwise, yet we can get nothing by repining, nor save anything by resisting.

But if it were fit for us to reason with God Almighty, and your ladyship's loss were acknowledged as great as it could have been to any one, yet, I doubt, you would have but ill grace to complain at the rate you have done, or rather as you do; for the first emotions or passions may be pardoned; it is only the continu-

* Addressed to the Countess of Essex, after the death of her only daughter.

ance of them which makes them inexcusable. In this world, madam, there is nothing perfectly good; and whatever is called so, is but either comparatively with other things of its kind, or else with the evil there is mingled in its composition; so he is a good man who is better than men commonly are, or in whom the good qualities are more than the bad; so, in the course of life, his condition is esteemed good, which is better than that of most other men, or in which the good circumstances are more than the evil. By this measure, I doubt, madam, your complaints ought to be turned into acknowledgments, and your friends would have cause to rejoice rather than to condole with you. When your ladyship has fairly considered how God Almighty has dealt with you in what He has given, you may be left to judge yourself how you have dealt with Him in your complaints for what He has taken away. If you look about you, and consider other lives as well as your own, and what your lot is, in comparison with those that have been drawn in the circle of your knowledge; if you think how few are born with honor, how many die without name or children, how little beauty we see, how few friends we hear of, how much poverty and how many diseases there are in the world, you will

fall down upon your knees, and, instead of repining at one affliction, will admire so many blessings as you have received at the hand of God.

* * * * * * * *

You will say, perhaps, that one thing was all to you, and your fondness of it made you indifferent to everything else. But this, I doubt, will be so far from justifying you, that it will prove to be your fault as well as your misfortune. God Almighty gave you all the blessings of life, and you set your heart wholly upon one, and despise or undervalue all the rest: is this His fault or yours? Nay, is it not to be very unthankful to Heaven, as well as very scornful to the rest of the world? Is it not to say, because you have lost one thing God has given, you thank Him for nothing He has left, and care not what He takes away? Is it not to say, since that one thing is gone out of the world, there is nothing left in it which you think can deserve your kindness or esteem? A friend makes me a feast, and places before me all that his care or kindness could provide: but I set my heart upon one dish alone, and, if that happens to be thrown down, I scorn all the rest; and though he sends for another of the same kind, yet I rise from the table in a rage, and say,

"My friend is become my enemy, and he has done me the greatest wrong in the world." Have I reason, madam, or good grace in what I do? Or would it become me better to eat of the rest that is before me, and think no more of what had happened, and could not be remedied?

Christianity teaches and commands us to moderate our passions; to temper our affections towards all things below; to be thankful for the possession, and patient under the loss, whenever *He* who gave shall see fit to take away. Your extreme fondness was perhaps as displeasing to God before as now your extreme affliction is; and your loss may have been a punishment for your faults in the manner of enjoying what you had. It is at least pious to ascribe all the ill that befalls us to our own demerits, rather than to injustice in God. And it becomes us better to adore the issues of His providence in the effects, than to inquire into the causes; for submission is the only way of reasoning between a creature and its Maker; and contentment in His will is the greatest duty we can pretend to, and the best remedy we can apply to all our misfortunes. * * * * * *

When young children are taken away, we are sure they are well, and escape much ill, which would. in all appearance, have befallen

them if they had stayed longer with us. Our kindness to them is deemed to proceed from common opinons or fond imaginations, not friendship, or esteem; and to be grounded upon entertainment rather than use in the many offices of life. Nor would it pass from any person besides your ladyship, to say you lost a companion and a friend of nine years old; though you lost one, indeed, who gave the fairest hopes that could be of being both in time, and everything else that is estimable and good. But yet that itself is very uncertain, considering the chances of time, the infection of company, the snares of the world, and the passions of youth: so that the most excellent and agreeable creature of that tender age might, by the course of years and accidents, become the most miserable herself; and a greater trouble to her friends by living long, than she could have been by dying young.

Yet after all, madam, I think your loss so great, and some measure of your grief so deserved, that, would all your passionate complaints, all the anguish of your heart, do anything to retrieve it; could tears water the lovely plant, so as to make it grow again after once it is cut down; could sighs furnish new breath, or could it draw life and spirits from the wasting of yours, I am sure

your friends would be so far from accusing your passion, that they would encourage it as much, and share it as deeply, as they could. But alas! the eternal laws of the creation extinguish all such hopes, forbid all such designs; nature gives us many children and friends to take them away, but takes none away, to give them to us again. And this makes the excesses of grief to be universally condemned as unnatural, because so much in vain; whereas nature does nothing in vain; as unreasonable, because so contrary to our own designs; for we all design to be well and at ease, and by grief we make ourselves troubles most properly out of the dust, whilst our ravings and complaints are but like arrows shot up into the air at no mark, and so to no purpose, but only to fall back upon our own heads and destroy ourselves.

SIR WILLIAM TEMPLE.

GOD GRACIOUS IN HIS JUDGMENTS.

BUT for myself, I bless God I have observed and felt so much mercy in this angry dispensation of God, that I am almost transported; I am sure highly pleased with thinking how infinitely sweet his *mercies* are, when his *judgments* are so gracious. — *Jeremy Taylor on the loss of two children.*

THE TWINS.

'T WAS summer, and a Sabbath eve,
And balmy was the air;
I saw a sight that made me grieve,
And yet that sight was fair:
Within a little coffin lay
Two lifeless babes as sweet as May.

Like waxen dolls which children dress,
The little bodies were;
A look of placid happiness
Did in each face appear:
And in the coffin, short and wide,
They lay together, side by side.

Their mother, as a lily pale,
Sat by them on their bed;
And bending o'er them told her tale,
And many a tear she shed;
Yet oft she cried amidst her pain,
"My babes and I shall meet again."

THE BITTER CUP DECLINED.

THE cup of life just to her lips she prest,
Found the taste bitter, and declined the rest:
Averse, then turning from the face of day,
She softly sighed her infant soul away.

I SEE THEE STILL.

I SEE thee still;
Remembrance, faithful to her trust,
Calls thee in beauty from the dust;
Thou comest in the morning light,
Thou 'rt with me through the gloomy night;
In dreams I meet thee as of old;
Then thy soft arms my neck enfold,
And thy sweet voice is in my ear;
In every scene to memory dear,
I see thee still.

I see thee still,
In every hallowed token round;
This little ring thy finger bound,
This lock of hair thy forehead shaded,
This silken chain by thee was braided,
These flowers, all withered now, like thee,
Sweet *Sister*, thou didst cull for me;
This book was thine; here didst thou read;
This picture — ah! yes, here, indeed,
I see thee still.

I see thee still;
Here was thy summer noon's retreat,
Here was thy favorite fireside seat;

This was thy chamber — here, each day,
I sat and watched thy sad decay;
Here, on this bed, thou last didst lie;
Here, on this pillow, thou didst die.
Dark hour! once more its woes unfold;
As then I saw thee, pale and cold,
I see thee still.

I see thee still;
Thou art not in the grave confined —
Death cannot claim the immortal Mind;
Let Earth close o'er its sacred trust,
But Goodness dies not in the dust;
Thee, O my *Sister!* 't is not thee
Beneath the coffin's lid I see!
Thou to a fairer land art gone;
There, let me hope, my journey done,
To see thee still!

CHARLES SPRAGUE.

ON THE DEATH OF AN INFANT.

A GUARDIAN ANGEL bore it to the shore
Where souls embark upon Life's stormy sea,
When, turning from the angry billows' roar,
The infant cried, "O take me back with thee!"

TO A MOTHER ON LOSING AN INFANT DAUGHTER.

GOD does nothing without a reason. That reason may have respect to you — it may have respect to your child, and not unlikely to both. He sees effects in their causes. Your case may have been this: you may have been in danger of loving the world too much, and He removed the cause in time. Her case may have been this: she may have been in danger from the growth of a corrupt nature, and He took her in the bud of being that she might grow without imperfection, "for of such is the kingdom of heaven." Think of your child, then, not as dead but as living, not as a flower that is withered, but as one that is transplanted, and, touched by a divine hand, is blooming in richer colors and sweeter shades than those of earth, though to your eyes these last may have been beautiful, more beautiful than you will hope to see again.

"With patient mind thy course of duty run,
God nothing does nor suffers to be done
But thou wouldst do thyself if thou could'st see
The end of all He does as well as He."

REV. HERMAN HOOKER.

THE THIRD SON.

I HAVE a son, a third sweet son;
His age I cannot tell;
For they reckon not by years and months,
Where he hath gone to dwell.

To us, for fourteen anxious months
His infant smiles were given,
And then he bade farewell to earth,
And went to live in heaven.

I cannot tell what form is his,
What looks he weareth now,
Nor guess how bright a glory crowns
His shining seraph brow.

The thoughts that fill his sinless soul,
The bliss which he doth feel,
Are numbered with the secret things
Which God will not reveal.

But I know, for God hath told me this,
That he is now at rest,
Where other blessed infants are,
On their Saviour's loving breast.

Whate'er befalls his brethren twain,
His bliss can never cease;
Their lot may here be grief and fear,
But *his* is certain peace.

It may be that the tempter's wiles
Their souls from bliss may sever,
But, if our own poor faith fail not,
He must be ours forever.

When we think on what our darling is,
And what we still must be;
When we muse on *that* world's perfect bliss,
And *this* world's misery;

When we groan beneath this load of sin,
And feel this grief and pain,
O, we 'd rather lose our other two,
Than have him here again.

REV. J. MOULTRIE.

THE YOUNGEST.

I ROCKED her in the cradle,
And laid her in the tomb. She was the youngest.
What fireside circle hath not felt the charm
Of that sweet tie? The youngest ne'er grow old;
The fond endearments of our earlier days
We keep alive in them; and when they die,
Our youthful joys we bury with them.

OUR WEE WHITE ROSE.

ALL in our marriage garden
Grew, smiling up to God,
A bonnier flower than ever
Suck'd the green warmth of the sod;
O, beautiful unfathomably
Its little life unfurled;
And crown of all things was our wee
White Rose of all the world.

From out a balmy bosom
Our bud of beauty grew;
It fed on smiles for sunshine;
On tears for daintier dew:
Aye nestling warm and tenderly,
Our leaves of love were curled,
So close and close, about our wee
White Rose of all the world.

With mystical faint fragrance
Our house of life she fill'd —
Revealed each hour some fairy tower
Where winged hopes might build!
We saw — though none like us might see —
Such precious promise pearled
Upon the petals of our wee
White Rose of all the world.

But, evermore the halo
Of angel-light increased,
Like the mystery of moonlight
That folds some fairy feast.
Snow-white, snow-soft, snow-silently,
Our darling bud up-curled,
And dropt i' the grave — God's lap — our wee
White Rose of all the world.

Our rose was but in blossom;
Our life was but in spring;
When down the solemn midnight
We heard the spirits sing —
"Another bud of infancy
With holy dews impearled!"
And in their hands they bore our wee
White Rose of all the world.

You scarce could think so small a thing
Could leave a loss so large;
Her little light such shadow fling
From dawn to sunset's marge.
In other springs our life may be
In bannered bloom unfurled,
But never, never match our wee
White Rose of all the world.

GERALD MASSEY.

THE HAPPY BAND.

AROUND the throne of God in heaven,
Thousands of children stand —
Children whose sins are all forgiven,
A holy, happy band,
Singing, Glory, glory.

In flowing robes of spotless white,
See every one arrayed;
Dwelling in everlasting light,
And joys that never fade,
Singing, Glory, glory.

What brought them to that world above?
That heaven so bright and fair,
Where all is peace, and joy, and love;
How came those children there?
Singing, Glory, glory.

Because the Saviour shed his blood,
To wash away their sin;
Bathed in that pure and precious flood,
Behold them white and clean,
Singing, Glory, glory.

COMFORT.

'BOATMAN, boatman! my brain is wild,
As wild as the rainy seas;
My poor little child, my sweet little child,
Is a corpse upon my knees.

No holy choir to sing so low—
No priest to kneel in prayer,
No tire-woman to help me sew
A cap for his golden hair."

Dropping his oars in the rainy sea,
The pious boatman cried,
"Not without Him who is life to thee,
Could the little child have died!

"His grace the same, and the same His power,
Demanding our love and trust,
Whether He makes of the dust a flower,
Or changes a flower to dust.

"On the land and the water, all in all,
The strength to be still, or pray,
To blight the leaves in their time to fall,
Or light up the hills with May."

ALICE CAREY.

LEAVE THE RESULT WITH GOD.

SUPPOSE, now, there should be a mother, always uneasy and solicitous about her child, when it was in health, or sitting over it when in sickness, restless and anxious, trying this remedy, and that, without reason and without hope, just because she cannot give him up; — suppose, I say, that God should come to the bedside, and say to her, "Anxious mother, — I was taking care of your child, but since you are so restless and uneasy about it, I will give the case up to you, if you will take it. There is a great question to be decided; — shall that child recover, or die? I was going to decide it in the best way for yourself and him. But since you cannot trust me, you may decide it yourself. Look upon him, then, as he lies there suffering, and then look forward as far as you can into futurity; see as much as you can of his life here, if you allow him to live; and look forward to eternity, — to *his* eternity and yours. Get all the light you can, and then tell me whether you are really ready to take the responsibility of deciding the question, whether he shall live or die. Since you are not willing to allow me to decide it, I will leave you to decide it yourself."

What would be the feelings of a mother, if God should thus withdraw from the sick bed of her child, and leave the responsibility of the case in her hands alone! Who would dare to exercise the power, if the power were given, or say to a dying child, "you shall live, and on me shall be the responsibility?" Then let us all leave to God to decide. Let us be wise, and prudent, and faithful in all our duties, but never, for a moment, indulge in an anxious thought; — it is rebellion. Let us rather throw ourselves on God. Let us say to Him, that we do not know what is best, either for us, or our children, and ask Him to do with us *just as He pleases.* Then we shall be at peace at all times, — when disease makes its first attack, — when the critical hours approach, by which the question of life or death is to be decided, and even when the last night of the little patient's sufferings has come, and we see the vital powers gradually sinking, in their fearful struggle with death.

JACOB ABBOTT.

RESIGNATION.

THERE is no flock, however watched and tended,
But one dead lamb is there!
There is no fireside, howsoe'er defended,
But has one vacant chair!

The air is full of farewells to the dying,
And mournings for the dead:
The heart of Rachel, for her children crying,
Will not be comforted!

Let us be patient! These severe afflictions
Not from the ground arise,
But oftentimes celestial benedictions
Assume this dark disguise.

We see but dimly through the mist and vapors;
Amid these earthly damps,
What seem to us but sad, funereal tapers,
May be heaven's distant lamps.

There is no Death! what seems so is transition;
This life of mortal breath
Is but a suburb of the life elysian,
Whose portal we call Death.

She is not dead, — the child of our affection, —
But gone unto that school
Where she no longer needs our poor protection,
And Christ himself doth rule.

In that great cloister's stillness and seclusion,
By guardian angels led,
Safe from temptation, safe from sin's pollution,
She lives, whom we call dead.

Day after day we think what she is doing
In those bright realms of air;
Year after year, her tender steps pursuing,
Behold her grown more fair.

Thus do we walk with her, and keep unbroken
The bond which nature gives,
Thinking that our remembrance, though unspoken,
May reach her where she lives.

Not as a child shall we again behold her;
For when with raptures wild
In our embraces we again enfold her,
She will not be a child;

But a fair maiden, in her Father's mansion,
Clothed with celestial grace;
And beautiful with all the soul's expansion
Shall we behold her face.

And though at times impetuous with emotion
And anguish long suppressed,
The swelling heart heaves moaning like the ocean
That cannot be at rest —

We will be patient, and assuage the feeling
We may not wholly stay;
By silence sanctifying, not concealing,
The grief that must have way.

LONGFELLOW.

YES, AS A CHILD.

"Not as a child shall we again behold her."
Longfellow.

O, SAY not so! how shall I know my darling,
If changed her form, and veil'd with shining hair?
If, since her flight, has grown my little starling,
How shall I know her there?
On memory's page, by viewless fingers painted,
I see the features of my angel-child;
She passed away, ere sin her soul had tainted —
Passed to the undefiled.

O, say not so! for I would clasp her, even
As when below she lay upon my breast:

And dream of her as my fair bud in Heaven,
Amid the blossoms blest.
My little one was like a folded lily,
Sweeter than any on the azure wave ;
But night came down, a starless night, and chilly;
Alas ! we could not save !

Yes, as a child, serene and noble poet,
(O, Heaven were dark, were children wanting there !)
I hope to clasp my bud as when I wore it;
A dimpled baby fair.
Though years have flown, toward my blue-eyed daughter
My heart yearns ofttimes with a mother's love,
Its never-dying tendrils now enfold her, —
Enfold my child above.

E'en as a *babe*, my little blue-eyed daughter,
Nestle and coo upon my heart again ;
Wait for thy mother by the river-water, —
It shall not be in vain !
Wait as a child, — how shall I know my darling,
If changed her form, and veil'd with shining hair ?
If, since her flight, has grown my little starling,
How shall I know her there ?

FANNY FALES.

TAKEN FROM THE LIFE TO COME.

God took thee in his mercy,
A lamb untasked, untried;
He fought the fight for thee,
He won the victory,
And thou art sanctified.

I look around and see
The evil ways of men,
And oh! beloved child,
I 'm more than reconciled
To thy departure then.

The little arms that clasped me,
The innocent life that pressed,
Would they have been as pure,
Till now, as when of yore
I lulled thee on my breast?

Now like a dew drop shrined
Within a crystal stone,
Thou 'rt safe in heaven, my dove!
Safe with the Source of love,
The Everlasting One.

And when the hour arrives
From flesh that sets me free,
Thy spirit may await
The first at Heaven's gate
To meet and welcome me.

MRS. SOUTHEY

THE LITTLE ONE IS DEAD.

SMOOTH the hair and close the eyelids,
Let the window curtains fall;
With a smile upon her features,
She has answered to the call.

Let the children kiss her gently,
As she lies upon her bed;
God hath called her to his bosom,
And the little one is dead.

AN EPITAPH FOR AN INFANT.

BENEATH this stone, in soft repose,
Is laid a mother's dearest pride,
A flower that scarce had waked to life,
And light and beauty, ere it died.
God, in his wisdom, has recalled
The precious boon His love had given,
And though the casket moulders here,
The gem is sparkling now in heaven.

A CHILD IN HEAVEN.

A CLERGYMAN lost a child. A brother minister attended the funeral, and at the close of his remarks, the father of the deceased child arose, and spoke as follows to his people who were present: "When I have sought to minister to you consolation in the times of your affliction, weeping with you over your dying children, you have often said to me that I knew nothing of the anguish, and could not sympathize with you in your loss. I feel it now. I never did before." Then he directed them to the source of his comfort and support, and invited all to the fountain of living waters. His house stood on a hill-side, overlooking a beautiful river, on the other side of which were luxurious fields. Alluding to this, he continued, "Often, as I have stood on the borders of this stream, and looked over to the fair fields on the other shore, I have felt but little interest in the people or the place in full view before me. The river separates me from them, and my thoughts and affections were here. But a few months ago, one of my children moved across to the other side, and took up his residence there. Since that time, my heart has been there also. In the morning,

when I rise and look out toward the east, I think of my child who is over there, and again and again through the day I think of him, and the other side of the river is always in my thoughts, with the child who has gone there to dwell. And now, since another of my children has crossed the river of death, and has gone to dwell on the other side, my heart is drawn out towards heaven, and the inhabitants of heaven, as it was never drawn before. I supposed that heaven was dear to me; that my Father was there, and my friends were there, and that I had a great interest in heaven, but *I had no child there;* now I have; and I never think and never shall think of heaven, but with the memory of that dear child who is to be among its inhabitants for ever."

WHY CHILDREN DIE.

I HAVE seen persons who gather from the *parterre* their choicest flowers, just as they begin to open into full bloom and fragrance, lest some passer-by should tear them from the bush and destroy them. Does not God sometimes gather into heaven young and innocent children for the same reason — lest some rude hand may despoil them of their beauty?

THE DYING CHILD.

MOTHER, I 'm tired, and I would fain be sleeping;
Let me repose upon thy bosom seek;
But promise me that thou wilt leave off weeping,
Because thy tears fall hot upon my cheek.
Here it is cold; the tempest raveth madly;
But in my dreams all is so wondrous bright;
I see the angel children smiling gladly,
When from my weary eyes I shut the light.

Mother, one steals beside me now! and listen;
Dost thou not hear the music's sweet accord?
See how his white wings beautifully glisten!
Surely those wings were given him by our Lord!
Green, gold, and red are floating all around me;
These are the flowers the angel scattereth:
Shall I have also wings whilst life has bound me?
Or, mother, are they given alone in death?

Why dost thou clasp me as if I were going?
Why dost thou press thy cheek thus unto mine?
Thy cheek is hot, and still thy tears are flowing;
I will, dear mother, will be always thine!

Do not sigh thus, — it marreth my reposing;
And if thou weep, then I must weep with thee!
Oh, I am tired, — my weary eyes are closing;
Look, mother, look! the angel kisseth me!

FROM THE DANISH OF ANDERSON.

THE PLAYTHINGS.

Oh! mother, here 's the very top
That brother used to spin, —
The vase with seeds I 've seen him drop
To call our robin in, —
The line that held his pretty kite,
His bow, his cup and ball, —
The slate on which he learned to write,
His feather, cap, and all!

My dear, I 'd put the things away,
Just where they were before:
Go, Anna, take him out to play;
And shut the closet door.
Sweet innocent! he little thinks
The slightest thought expressed,
Of him that 's lost, how deep it sinks
Within a mother's breast.

H. F. GOULD.

THE THREE LITTLE GRAVES.

I SOUGHT at twilight's pensive hour
The path which mourners tread,
Where many a marble stone reveals
The city of the dead; —
The city of the dead, where all
From feverish toil repose,
While round their beds, the simple flower
In sweet profusion blows.

And there I marked a pleasant spot
Enclosed with tender care,
Where side by side three infants lay,
The only tenants there;
Nor weed, nor bramble raised its head
To mar the hallowed scene,
And 't was a mother's tears, methought,
Which kept that turf so green.

The eldest was a gentle girl,
She sunk as rose-buds fall,
And then two little brothers came,
They were their parents' all, —
Their parents' all! — and ah, how oft
The moan of sickness rose,
Before, within these narrow mounds,
They found a long repose.

Their cradle-sports beside the hearth,
At winter's eve, are o'er;
Their tuneful tones, so full of mirth,
Delight the ear no more: —
Yet still the thrilling echo lives,
And many a lisping word
Is treasured in affection's heart,
By grieving memory stirred.

Three little graves! — Three little graves!
Come hither ye who see
Your blooming babes around you smile,
A blissful company, —
And of those childless parents think,
With sympathizing pain,
And soothe them with a Saviour's words,
"Your dead shall rise again."

MRS. L. H. SIGOURNEY

OUR LAMBS.

THE tender Shepherd beckoningly
Our Lambs doth hold,
That we may take our own when He
Makes up the fold.

GERALD MASSEY.

THE SERAPH CHILD.

The following lines were written by DANIEL WEBSTER in 1825, on the death of a son three years of age, and were enclosed in a letter to his wife:

My son, thou wast my heart's delight,
Thy morn of life was gay and cheery;
That morn has rushed to sudden night,
Thy father's house is sad and dreary.

I held thee on my knee, my son!
And kissed thee laughing, kissed thee weeping;
But ah! thy little day is done,
Thou 'rt with my angel sister sleeping.

The staff on which my years should lean
Is broken, ere those years come o'er me:
My funeral rites thou should'st have seen,
But thou art in thy tomb before me.

Thou rearest to me no filial stone,
No parent's grave with tears beholdest;
Thou art my ancestor, my son!
And stand'st in Heaven's account the oldest.

On earth my lot was soonest cast,
Thy generation after mine;
Thou hast thy predecessor past;
Earlier eternity is thine.

I should have set before thine eyes
The road to heaven, and showed it clear;
But thou untaught spring'st to the skies,
And leav'st thy teacher lingering here.

Sweet seraph, I would learn of thee,
And hasten to partake thy bliss!
And oh! to thy world welcome me,
As first I welcomed thee to this.

Dear angel, thou art safe in Heaven;
No prayer for thee need more be made;
Oh! let thy prayer for those be given
Who oft have blessed thy infant head.

My father! I beheld thee born,
And led thy tottering steps with care;
Before me risen to heaven's bright morn,
My son! my father! guide me there.

EPITAPH.

Ere sin could blight or sorrow fade,
Death came with friendly care,
The opening bud to heaven conveyed,
And bade it blossom there.

COLERIDGE.

OUR BABY.

To-day we cut the fragrant sod,
With trembling hands, asunder,
And lay this well beloved of God,
Our dear dead baby, under.
Oh, hearts that ache, and ache afresh!
Oh, tears too blindly raining!
Our hearts are weak, yet, being flesh,
Too strong for our restraining!

Sleep, darling, sleep! Cold rains shall steep
Thy little turf-made dwelling;
Thou wilt not know — so far below —
What winds or storms are swelling;
And birds shall sing, in the warm spring,
And flowers bloom about thee:
Thou wilt not heed them, love, but oh,
The loneliness without thee!

Father, we *will* be comforted!
Thou wast the gracious giver:
We yield her up — not dead, not dead —
To dwell with Thee forever!
Take Thou our child! *Ours* for a *day*,
Thine, while the ages blossom!
This little shining head we lay
In the Redeemer's bosom!

ON THE DEATH OF A FRIEND'S CHILD.

DEATH never came so nigh to me before,
Nor showed me his mild face: oft had I mused,
Of calm and peace and deep forgetfulness,
Of folded hands, closed eyes, and heart at rest,
And slumber sound beneath a flowery turf,
Of faults forgotten, and an inner place
Kept sacred for us in the heart of friends;
But these were idle fancies, satisfied
With the mere husk of this great mystery,
And dwelling in the outward shows of things.
Heaven is not mounted to on wings of dreams,
Nor doth the unthankful happiness of youth
Aim thitherward, but floats from bloom to bloom,
With earth's warm patch of sunshine well content:
'T is sorrow builds the shining ladder up,
Whose golden rounds are our calamities,
Whereon our firm feet planting, nearer God
The spirit climbs, and hath its eyes unsealed.

True is it that Death's face seems stern and cold,
When he is sent to summon those we love,
But all God's angels come to us disguised;
Sorrow and sickness, poverty and death,
One after other lift their frowning masks,

And we behold the seraph's face beneath,
All radiant with the glory and the calm
Of having looked upon the front of God.
With every anguish of our earthly part
The spirit's sight grows clearer; this was meant
When Jesus touched the blind man's lids with clay.
Life is the jailer, Death the angel sent
To draw the unwilling bolts and set us free.
He flings not ope the ivory gate of Rest, —
Only the fallen spirit knocks at that, —
But to benigner regions beckons us
To destinies of more rewarded toil.
In the hushed chamber, sitting by the dead,
It grates on us to hear the flood of life
Whirl rustling onward, senseless of our loss.
The bee hums on; around the blossomed vine
Whirs the light humming-bird; the cricket chirps;
The locust's shrill alarum stings the ear;
Hard by, the cock shouts lustily; from farm to farm,
His cheery brothers, telling of the sun,
Answer, till far away the joyance dies.
We never knew before how God had filled
The summer air with happy, living sounds;
All round us seems an overplus of life;
And yet the one dear heart lies cold and still.

It is most strange, when the great miracle
Hath for our sakes been done, when we have had
Our inwardest experience of God,
When with his presence still the room expands,
And is awed after him, that naught is changed,
That Nature's face looks unacknowledging,
And the mad world still dances heedless on
After its butterflies, and gives no sign.
'T is hard at first to see it all aright;
In vain Faith blows her trump to summon back
Her scattered troop; yet, through the clouded glass
Of our own bitter tears, we learn to look
Undazzled on the kindness of God's face;
Earth is too dark, and Heaven alone shines through.

It is no little thing, when a fresh soul
And a fresh heart, with their unmeasured scope
For good, not gravitating earthward yet,
But circling in diviner periods,
Are sent into the world, — no little thing,
When this unbounded possibility
Into the outer silence is withdrawn.
Ah, in this world, where every guiding thread
Ends suddenly in the one sure centre, death,
The visionary hand of Might-have-been
Alone can fill Desire's cup to the brim!

How changed, dear friend, are thy part and thy
child's!
He bends over *thy* cradle now, or holds
His warning finger out to be thy guide;
Thou art the nursling now; he watches thee
Slow learning, one by one, the secret things
Which are to him used sights of every day
He smiles to see thy wondering glances con
The grass and pebbles of the spirit-world,
To thee miraculous; and he will teach
Thy knees their due observances of prayer.

Children are God's apostles, day by day
Sent forth to teach of love, and hope, and
peace;
Nor hath thy babe his mission left undone.
To me, at least, his going hence hath given
Serener thoughts and nearer to the skies,
And opened a new fountain in my heart
For thee, my friends, and all: and O, if Death
More near approaches, meditates, and clasps
Even now some dearer, more reluctant hand,
God, strengthen Thou my faith, that I may see
That 't is Thine angel, who, with loving haste,
Unto the service of the inner shrine
Doth waken Thy beloved with a kiss!

J. R. LOWELL.

TO A CHRISTIAN FATHER.

AGAIN in the furnace, my brother! Again lamenting under the chastenings of God! My heart bleeds with yours, I pour out my tears and supplications that this new and sore visiting may be blessed, and may afterwards yield the peaceable fruits of righteousness. It shall be so. It is so, in some measure, already. Whatever brings us to the feet of our Redeemer, does us good. He is the Physician, and he knows best how to make up the prescription, and how to administer it. He has taken away your boy, but not Himself, nor his loving kindnesses. He has shown you the rod, but not the evil it has avoided. He has made you to smart under the stroke, but it is, probably, a substitute for some blow unspeakably more awful, and perhaps nigh at hand when He smote you, but now turned aside forever. We must live by *faith*, my brother. Our comforts must not be our gods. Our souls have neither purity, nor peace, nor establishment, nor victory, but in proportion as our fellowship is with the Lord our life, and our life-giving head. O, for that habitual nearness to Him which shall keep us in constant and gracious de-

pendence upon His word of truth, which He has promised never to take utterly from us. The further the creature removes from us, the more desirable and consoling is our walking with Him who, when we are overwhelmed, knows our path.

REV. J. M. MASON, D. D.

TO A CHRISTIAN MOTHER.

HAVE you lost two lovely children? Did you make them your idols? If you did, God has saved you from idolatry. If you did not, you have your God still, and a creature cannot be miserable, who has a God. The little words "My God," have infinitely more sweetness than "my sons" or "my daughters." Were they very desirable blessings? Your God calls you to the nobler sacrifice. Can you give up these to Him at His call? So was Isaac, when Abraham was required to part with him at God's altar. Are you not a daughter of Abraham? Then imitate his faith, his self-denial, his obedience, and make your evidences of such a spiritual relation to him shine brighter on this solemn occasion. Has God taken them from your arms? And had you not given them to God before? Are you displeased that God

calls for His own? Was not your heart sincere in the resignation of them? Show then, madam, the sincerity of your heart in leaving them in the hand of God. Do you say, the, are lost? Not out of God's sight, and God's world, though they are gone out of your sight and our world. "All live to God." You may hope the spreading covenant of grace has sheltered them from the second death. They live, though not with you.

Are you ready to complain, you have brought forth for the grave? It may be so, but not in vain. Is. 64: 25. — "They shall not labor in vain, nor bring forth for trouble (i. e. for sorrow without hope); for they are the seed of the blessed of the Lord, and their offspring with them." This has been a sweet text to many a mother, when their children are called away betimes.

DR. WATTS.

REMEMBRANCE OF THE DEAD.

WE are forbidden to murmur, but we are not forbidden to *regret;* and whom we loved tenderly while living, we may still pursue with an affectionate remembrance, without having any occasion to charge ourselves with rebellion against the sovereignty that appointed a separation.

THE DEAD CHILD.

FEW things appear so beautiful as a young child in its shroud. The little innocent face looks so sublimely simple and confiding among the cold terrors of death. Crimeless and fearless that little mortal has passed alone under the shadow. There is death in its sublimest and purest image; no hatred, no hypocrisy, no suspicion, no care for the morrow, ever darkened that little face; death has come lovingly upon it; there is nothing cruel or harsh in its victory. The yearnings of love indeed cannot be stifled; for the prattle and smile—all the little world of thoughts, that were so delightful—are gone forever. Awe, too, will overcast us in its presence, for the lonely voyager; for the child has gone, simple and trusting, into the presence of an all-wise Father; and of such, we know, is the kingdom of heaven.

NOT IN VAIN.

OH, not in vain thy life! Thou hast not sown,
Yet the rich harvest reapest as thy own;
Thou hast not fought, but thou hast won the prize,
Hast never borne the cross, yet gained the skies.

THE LOST LAMB.

Lost lamb! there is a starry fold
Where innocence is safe forever:
There chilling frosts and wintry cold
Find entrance never.

Far from this sphere of doubt and gloom
The folding arms of love are round thee;
With flowers of everlasting bloom
Have angels crowned thee.

Sweet, perished bud of promise rare!
Through cloud-rifts in the gloom impending,
Streams light to comfort our despair,
The darkness rending.

Safe from the troubles that molest
Earth's pilgrim toward the sunset hieing,
On the good Shepherd's tender breast
Our lamb is lying.

If earnest prayer could bring him back,
I would not plead for his returning,
Where dimly, in the midnight black,
Hope's star is burning —

Where Sorrow, with a trembling hand,
The death-dimmed eye of Beauty closes,
And Love goes mourning, through the land,
For her lost roses.

W. H. C. Hosmer.

THE FIRST-BORN.

We laid thee down in sinless rest, and from thine infant brow
Culled one soft lock of radiant hair — our only solace now, —
Then placed around thy beauteous corse, flowers, not more fair and sweet;
Twin rosebuds in thy little hands, and jasmine at thy feet.

Though other offspring still be ours, as fair perchance as thou,
With all the beauty of thy cheek — the sunshine of thy brow,
They never can replace the bud our early fondness nurst,
They may be lovely and beloved, but not like thee — the first!

The first! How many a memory bright that one sweet word can bring
Of hopes that blossomed, drooped, and died, in life's delightful spring;

Of fervid feelings passed away — those early
seeds of bliss,
That germinate in hearts unseared by such a
world as this!

My sweet one, my sweet one, my fairest, and
my first!
When I think of what thou might'st have been,
my heart is like to burst;
But gleams of gladness through the gloom their
soothing radiance dart,
And my sighs are hushed, my tears are dried,
when I turn to what thou art!

Pure as the snow-flake ere it falls and takes the
stain of earth,
With not a taint of mortal life, except the
mortal birth, —
God bade thee early taste the spring for which
so many thirst;
And bliss — eternal bliss — is thine, my fairest,
and my first!

ALARIC A. WATTS.

THINK THAT YOUR BABE IS THERE.

Ye who mourn
Whene'er yon vacant cradle, or the robes
That decked the lost one's form, call back a tide
Of alienated joy, can ye not trust
Your treasure to *His* arms, whose changeless care
Passeth a mother's love? Can ye not hope,
When a few wasting years their course have run,
To go to him, though he no more on earth
Returns to you?
And when glad faith doth catch
Some echo of celestial harmonies,
Archangels' praises, with the high response
Of cherubim, and seraphim, O think —
Your babe is there! Mrs. L. H. Sigourney.

"I SHALL GO TO HIM, BUT HE SHALL NOT RETURN TO ME."

While sickness rent thine infant frame,
Before our God we wept and prayed;
But when His heavenly summons came,
Fond nature struggled, and obeyed.
We laid thee in thy early rest,
And changed the burden of our prayer:
May He who took thee to the blest,
But make thee our forerunner there!

THOUGHT AT A CHILD'S GRAVE.

'T is the work
Of many a dark hour, and of many a prayer,
To bring the heart back from an infant gone!
Hope must give o'er, and busy fancy blot
Its images from all the silent rooms,
And every sight and sound familiar to her
Undo its sweetest link; and so, at last,
The fountain that, once loosed, must flow forever,
Will hide and waste in silence. When the smile
Steals to her pallid lip again, and spring
Wakens its buds above thee, we will come,
And, standing by thy music-haunted grave,
Look on each other cheerfully, and say,
A child that we have loved is gone to heaven,
And by this gate of flowers she passed away!

WILLIS.

THE ONLY CHILD.

PRETTY boy!
He was my only child; how fair he looked,
In the white garment that encircled him!
'T was like a marble slumber, and when we
Laid him beneath the green earth in his bed,
I thought my heart was breaking; yet I lived,
But I am weary now. BARRY CORNWALL.

SOWING IN TEARS.

STRAIGHT and still the baby lies,
No more smiling in his eyes,
Neither tears nor wailing cries.

Smiles and tears alike are done:
He has need of neither one —
Only I must weep alone.

Tiny fingers, all too slight,
Hold within their grasping tight,
Waxen berries scarce more white.

Nights and days of weary pain,
I have held them close — in vain;
Now I never shall again.

Crossed upon a silent breast,
By no suffering distressed,
Here they lie in marble rest.

They shall ne'er unfolded be,
Never more in agony
Cling so pleadingly to me.

Never! O, the hopeless sound
To my heart, so closely wound
All his little being round!

I forget the shining crown,
Glad exchange for cross laid down,
Now his baby brows upon.

Yearning sore, I only know
I am very full of woe —
And I want my baby so!

Selfish heart, that thou shouldst prove
So unworthy of the love
Which thine idol doth remove!

Blinded eyes, that cannot see,
Past the present misery,
Joy and comfort full and free!

O! my Father, loving Lord!
I am ashamed at my own word;
Strength and patience me afford.

I will yield me to Thy will;
Now Thy purposes fulfil;
Only help me to be still.

Though my mother-heart shall ache,
I believe that, for Thy sake,
It shall not entirely break.

And I know I yet shall own,
For my seeds of sorrow sown,
Sheaves of joy around Thy throne!

DEATH AND THE MOTHER.

DEATH to the mother said,
"Thou canst not keep the baby still, let me!
Thou mark'st with pain his gasping, feverish breath;
With one long kiss I set it free,
And on his brow the signet write
Of immortality!
Oft thou dost strive to lay
In smoothness down his golden hair: let me!
Smoother beneath thy touch 't will never be,
Nor look more bright and fair!
Nay, weep not, that his toilet I would make,
Closing like violet up his eyes of blue;
For know'st thou not, earth-flowers as frail as this
Were better closed against life's chilling dew?
The sheet no more thou 'lt fold,
Above his dimpled limbs over and o'er;
So statue like, inanimate and cold,
They will lie bare no more!
The form that holds thy baby to His breast
Thou wilt not look to see!
Nor hear'st the soft voice breaking through his rest,
'Suffer the little one to come to Me!'

Else thou and I would soon be reconciled.
No more thy tears would flow —
But thou would'st bless me that I bear thy child
Forth from a life of woe
To One unbiased by a mother's love
Or mother's fears, to bring him up!
Perchance to aid *thee* when thou goest above!
Then push me from the still, the sweet, sad
cup!"

MISS LYDIA L. A. VERY.

THE INFANT'S GRAVE.

SLEEP, little cherub! on the breast
Of the green hillock take thy rest;
The wintry snow, the dropping rain,
Shall dash above thy head in vain;
The beaded hail, the cutting sleet,
Unheeded o'er thy head shall beat;
The spring-buds o'er thee will renew
Their blooming sweets and vernal hue;
And honeyed flowers shall o'er thee spring,
And birds their dulcet measures sing.

I. MCLELLAN.

TWO IN HEAVEN.

"You have two children," said I.

"I have four," was the reply — "two on earth, two in heaven."

There spoke the mother! Still hers, only gone before! Still remembered, loved and cherished, by the hearth and at the board — their places not yet filled, even though their successors draw life from the same faithful breast where their dying heads were pillowed.

"Two in Heaven!"

Safely housed from storm and tempest. No sickness there, nor drooping head, nor fading eye, nor weary feet. By green pastures, tended by the good Shepherd, linger the little lambs of the heavenly fold.

"Two in Heaven!"

Earth less attractive. Eternity nearer. Invisible cords drawing the maternal soul upwards. "Still small voices" ever whisper "Come!" to the world-weary spirit.

"Two in Heaven!"

Mother of angels! Walk softly! Holy eyes watch thy footsteps! Cherub forms bend to listen! Keep thy spirits free from earth's taint; so shalt thou go to them, though they may not return to thee.

THE EMPTY CRADLE.

SHE sits beside the cradle,
And her tears are streaming fast,
For she sees the present only,
While she thinks of all the past;
Of the days so full of gladness,
When her first-born's answering kiss
Filled her soul with such a rapture
That it knew no other bliss.
O! those happy, happy moments!
They but deepen her despair,
For she bends above the cradle,
And her baby is not there!

There are words of comfort spoken,
And the leaden clouds of grief
Wear the smiling bow of promise,
And she feels a sad relief;
But her wavering thoughts will wander
Till they settle on the scene
Of the dark and silent chamber,
And of all that might have been!
For a little vacant garment,
Or a shining tress of hair,
Tells her heart, in tones of anguish,
That her baby is not there!

She sits beside the cradle,
  But her tears no longer flow,
For she sees a blessed vision,
  And forgets all earthly woe;
Saintly eyes look down upon her,
  And the voice that hushed the sea
Stills her spirits with the whisper,
  "Suffer them to come to Me."
And while her soul is lifted
  On the soaring wings of prayer,
Heaven's crystal gates swung inward,
  And she sees her baby there!

ROBERT S. CHILTON.

BEREAVEMENT.

O YE who say, "We have a child in heaven;"
Who have felt that desolate isolation sharp
Defined in Death's own face; who have stood beside
The silent river, and stretched out pleading hands
For some sweet babe upon the other bank,
That went forth where no human hand might lead,
And left the shut house with no light, no sound,
No answer, when the mourners wail without!
What we have known, ye know, and only know.

GERALD MASSEY.

THE LAST SMILE.

O, WHY smiled the babe in its dying hour,
When its earth-weary days were done?
It had faded away like a blighted flower,
In the rays of the summer's sun;
Love-full was the look of the innocent child,
So peaceful, so trusting, so sweetly it smiled.

O, why did it smile? Had angels down-come
From the far-off sunny-hued land,
To bear its pure spirit away to its home,
To join a bright seraphim band?
Ah, yes, and they whispered of love and of peace,
Of joys and of pleasures that never will cease.

D. HARDY, JR.

LITTLE GRAVES.

THERE 's many an empty cradle,
There 's many a vacant bed,
There 's many a lonely bosom,
Whose joy and light are fled;
For thick in every graveyard
The little hillocks lie —
And every hillock represents
An angel in the sky.

SAFE FOR EVERMORE.

Our beauteous child we laid amidst the silence
of the dead,
We heaped the earth and spread the turf above
the cherub head;
We turned again to sunny life, to other ties as
dear,
And the world has thought us comforted, when
we have dried the tear.

O we have one, and only one, secure in sacred
trust,
It is the lone and lovely one that's sleeping in
the dust;
We fold it in our arms again, we see it by our
side,
In the helplessness of innocence which sin has
never tried.

All earthly trust, all mortal years, however light
they fly,
But darken on the glowing cheek, and dim the
eagle eye;
But there, our bright, unwithering flower — our
spirit's hoarded store —
We keep through every chance and change, the
same for evermore.

MY CHILD.

I CANNOT make him dead!
His fair sunshiny head
Is ever bounding round my study chair;
Yet, when my eyes, now dim
With tears, I turn to him,
The vision vanishes — he is not there!

I walk my parlor floor,
And through the open door
I hear a footfall on the chamber stair;
I'm stepping toward the hall,
To give the boy a call;
And then bethink me that — he is not there!

I tread the crowded street;
A satchell'd lad I meet,
With the same beaming eyes and colored hair;
And, as he 's running by,
Follow him with my eye,
Scarcely believing that — he is not there!

I know his face is hid
Under the coffin-lid;
Closed are his eyes; cold is his forehead fair:
My hand that marble felt;
O'er it in prayer I knelt;
Yet my heart whispers that — he is not there!

I cannot *make* him dead!
When passing by the bed,
So long watched over with parental care,
My spirit and my eye
Seek it inquiringly,
Before the thought comes that — he is not there!

When at the cool, gray break
Of day, from sleep I wake,
With my first breathing of the morning air
My soul goes up, with joy,
To Him who gave my boy;
Then comes the sad thought that — he is not there!

When at the day's calm close,
Before we seek repose,
I'm with his mother, offering up our prayer,
Whate'er I may be *saying*,
I am, in spirit, praying
For our boy's spirit, though — he is not there!

Not there! — Where then is he?
The form I used to see
Was but the *raiment* that he used to wear:
The grave, that now doth press
Upon that cast-off dress,
Is but his wardrobe locked; — *he* is not there!

He lives! — In all the past
He lives; nor to the last,
Of seeing him again will I despair:
In dreams I see him now;
And, on his angel brow,
I see it written, "Thou shalt see me *there!*"

Yes, we all live to God!
FATHER, thy chastening rod
So help us, thine afflicted ones, to bear,
That, in the spirit land,
Meeting, at thy right hand,
'T will be our heaven to find that — he is *there!*

REV. JOHN PIERPONT.

THE TRANSPLANTED FLOWER.

IN some rude spot, where vulgar herbage grows,
If chance a violet rear its purple head,
The careful gard'ner moves it ere it blows,
To thrive and flourish in a nobler bed.
Such was thy fate, dear child,
Thy opening such!
Pre-eminence in early bloom was shown,
For earth too good, perhaps,
And loved too much —
Heav'n saw, and early marked thee for its own!

R. B. SHERIDAN.

MARTIN LUTHER AND HIS DYING DAUGHTER.

LUTHER was called to part with Magdalen at the age of fourteen. She was a most endearing child, and united the firmness and perseverance of the father, with the gentleness and delicacy of the mother. When she grew very ill, Luther said, "Dearly do I love her! but, O my God, if it be Thy will to take her hence, I resign her to Thee without a murmur."

He then approached the bed, and said to her, "My dear little daughter, my beloved Magdalen, you would willingly remain with your earthly father; but, if God calls you, you will also willingly go to your Heavenly Father."

She replied, "Yes, dear father; it is as God pleases."

"Dear little girl," he exclaimed, "O how I love her! The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak."

He then took the Bible and read to her the passage in Isaiah: "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust, for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead."

He then said, "My daughter, enter thou into thy resting-place in peace."

She turned her dying eyes towards him, and said, with touching simplicity, "Yes, father."

The night preceding her death, Catharine,* worn out with watching, reclined her head on the sick-bed and slept. When she awoke, she appeared much agitated; and, as soon as Philip Melanchthon arrived, she hastened to him and told him her dream.

"I saw two young men, who seemed to be clad in robes of light, enter the room. I pointed to Magdalen, who lay quietly sleeping, and made a sign to them not to disturb her; but they said they came to conduct her to the bridal ceremony."

Melanchthon was much moved, and afterwards said to his wife, "These were holy angels, that Catharine saw in her dream; and they will conduct the virgin to her bridal in the celestial kingdom."

When her last moments were near, she raised her eyes tenderly to her parents, and begged them not to weep for her. "I go," said she, "to my Father in heaven," and a sweet smile irradiated her dying countenance. Luther threw himself upon his knees, weeping bit-

* The child's mother.

terly, and fervently prayed God to spare her to them; — in a few moments she expired in the arms of her father. Catharine, unequal to repressing the agony of her sorrow, was at a little distance, perhaps unable to witness the last, long-drawn breath. When the scene was closed, Luther repeated fervently, "The will of God be done! — yes, she has gone to her Father in heaven." Philip Melanchthon, who, with his wife, was present, said, "Parental love is an image of the Divine love impressed on the hearts of men; — God does not love the beings he has created less than parents love their children."

When they were about putting the child into the coffin, the father said, "Dear little Magdalen, I see thee now lifeless, but thou wilt shine in the heavens as a star! I am joyous in spirit, but in the flesh most sorrowful. It is wonderful to realize that she is happy, — better taken care of, — and yet to be so sad."

Then turning to the mother, who was bitterly weeping, he said, "Dear Catharine, remember where she is gone, — ah, she has made a blessed exchange. The heart bleeds, without doubt; it is natural that it should; but the spirit, the immortal spirit, rejoices. Happy are those who die young; — children do not doubt, — they believe; with them all is trust; — they fall asleep."

When the funeral took place, and the people were assembled to convey the body to its last home, some friends said they sympathized with him in his affliction. "Be not sorrowful for me," he replied; "I have sent a saint to heaven. O may we all die such a death! Gladly would I accept it now!"

When they began to chant, "Lord, remember not our ancient sins," Luther said, "Not only our ancient, but our present sins."

To his friend Justus Jonas, he soon after wrote the following letter:

"SEPTEMBER 23, 1542.

"I doubt not thou hast heard of the birth of my little Magdalen into the kingdom of Christ. My wife and I ought only to think of rendering thanks for her happy transition and peaceful end; — for by it she has escaped the power of the flesh, the world, the Turks,* and the devil; — yet nature is strong, and I cannot support this event without tears and groans, or, to speak more truly, without a broken heart. On my very soul are engraved the looks, the words, the gestures, — during her life, and on the bed of death, — of my obedient, my loving child! Even the death of Christ (and what are all deaths in comparison with that?) cannot turn away my thoughts from hers as it ought. She was, as thou knowest, lovely in her character, and full of tenderness."

LUTHER'S CHRISTMAS TREE.

* At this time there was great apprehension from the war with the Turks

DIRGE OF A CHILD.

No bitter tears for thee be shed,
  Blossom of being! seen and gone!
With flowers alone we strew thy bed,
  O blest departed one!
Whose all of life, a rosy ray,
Blushed into dawn, and passed away.

Yes! thou art fled, ere guilt had power
  To stain thy cherub soul and form;
Closed is the soft ephemeral flower,
  That never felt a storm!
The sun-beam's smile, the zephyr's breath,
All that it knew from birth to death.

Thou wert so like a form of light,
  That Heaven benignly called thee hence
Ere yet the world could breathe one blight
  O'er thy sweet innocence:
And thou, that brighter home to bless,
Art passed with all thy loveliness!

Oh, hadst thou still on earth remained,
  Vision of beauty! fair, as brief!
How soon thy brightness had been stained
  With passion or with grief!
Now not a sullying breath can rise
To dim thy glory in the skies.

We rear no marble o'er thy tomb,
No sculptured image there shall mourn;
Ah! fitter far the vernal bloom
Such dwelling to adorn.
Fragrance, and flowers, and dews, must be
The only emblems meet for thee.

Thy grave shall be a blessed shrine,
Adorned with nature's brightest wreath;
Each glowing season shall combine
Its incense there to breathe;
And oft upon the midnight air,
Shall viewless harps be murmuring there.

And oh! sometimes in visions blest,
Sweet spirit! visit our repose,
And bear from thine own world of rest,
Some balm for human woes!
What form more lovely could be given
Than thine, as messenger of Heaven?

MRS HEMANS.

NOT for the babe that sleepeth here
My tears bestow, my sorrows give,—
Pass on, and weep with grief sincere
For those who innocence outlive.

THE LENT JEWELS.

In schools of wisdom all the day was spent:
His steps at eve the Rabbi homeward bent,
With homeward thoughts which dwelt upon the wife
And two fair children who consoled his life.
She, meeting at the threshold, led him in,
And, with these words preventing, did begin:—
"Ever rejoicing at your wished return,
Yet am I most so now; for since this morn
I have been much perplexed and sorely tried
Upon one point which you shall now decide.
Some years ago, a friend into my care
Some jewels gave — rich, precious gems they were;
But having given them in my charge, this friend
Did afterward nor come for them, nor send,
But left them in my keeping for so long,
That now it almost seems to me a wrong
That he should suddenly arrive to-day,
To take those jewels, which he left, away.
What think you? Shall I freely yield them back,
And with no murmuring, — so henceforth to lack
Those gems myself, which I had learned to see
Almost as mine forever, mine in fee?"

"What question can be here? Your own
true heart
Must needs advise you of the only part:
That may be claimed again which was but lent,
And should be yielded with no discontent.
Nor surely can we find herein a wrong,
That it was left us to enjoy so long."
"Good is the word," she answered; "may we
now
And ever more that it is good allow!"
And, rising, to an inner chamber led,
And there she showed him, stretched upon one
bed,
Two children pale! and he the jewels knew,
Which God had lent him, and resumed anew.

R. C. TRENCH.

AN INFANT'S EPITAPH.

BENEATH this stone an infant lies,
To earth her body 's lent:
More glorious she 'll hereafter rise,
Though not more innocent.

When the archangel's trump shall blow,
And souls to bodies join,
Millions will wish their lives below
Had been as short as thine.

O MOURN NOT, FOND MOTHER.

O MOURN not, fond mother, the joys that depart,
There is comfort and peace for the stricken in heart;
God has taken the spirit that basked in thy love,
" The beautiful angels " have borne it above.

The plant that you reared to smile on earth's gloom,
Has fastened its roots in the soil of the tomb;
It smiled in your garden, so bright and so fair,
It has climbed o'er the wall, and is blossoming there.

The gem that you wore with pride on your breast,
Adorns with its light the land of the blest;
The rose still is fragrant, though broke from the stem,
The setting is ruined, but safe is the gem.

Then gird thee to labor, to trial and love,
The treasure once thine shall await thee above;
Be faithful, be earnest, night soon will be riven,
And the lost ones of earth, be thy jewels in heaven.

REV. S. F. SMITH.

THE TENANTLESS LITTLE BED.

My little one, my sweet one,
Thy couch is empty now,
Where oft I wiped the dews away
Which gathered on thy brow.
No more, amidst the sleepless night,
I smooth thy pillow fair;
'T is smooth indeed, but rest no more
Thy small, pale features there.

My little one, my sweet one,
Thou canst not come to me,
But nearer draws the numbered hour
When I shall go to thee;
And thou, perchance, with seraph smile
And golden harp in hand,
May'st come the first to welcome me
To our Immanuel's land.

HE SLEPT.

They said he died; — it seems to me
That, after hours of pain and strife,
He slept, one even, peacefully,
And woke to everlasting life.

TO AN INFANT IN HEAVEN.

THOU bright and star-like spirit!
That, in my visions wild,
I see mid heaven's seraphic host—
O! canst thou be my child?

My grief is quenched in wonder,
And pride arrests my sighs;
A branch from this unworthy stock
Now blossoms in the skies.

Our hopes of thee were lofty,
But have we cause to grieve?
O! could our fondest, proudest wish
A nobler fate conceive?

The little weeper, tearless,
The sinner, snatched from sin;
The babe, to more than manhood grown,
Ere childhood did begin.

And I, thy earthly teacher,
Would blush thy powers to see;
Thou art to me a parent now,
And I a child to thee!

What bliss is born of sorrow!
'T is never sent in vain —
The heavenly surgeon maims to save,
He gives no useless pain.

Our God, to call us homeward,
His only Son sent down:
And now, still more to tempt our hearts,
Has taken up our own.

THOMAS WARD

EPITAPH ON FOUR INFANTS.

BOLD infidelity! turn pale and die;
Beneath this stone, four infants' ashes lie;
Say, are they lost, or saved?
If death 's by sin, they sinned, because they 're here;
If heaven 's by works, in heaven they can't appear.
Reason, ah! how depraved!
Revere the sacred page, the knot 's untied;
They died, for Adam sinned: — they live, for Jesus died.

REV. R. ROBINSON.

CHILDREN TAKEN IN MERCY.

It may be your affliction is the loss of children. Well, have you not read such a message sent to a godly man, as that in 1 Samuel 2:33? "The son of thine whom I shall not cut off shall be to consume thine eyes, and to grieve thine heart." It is possible that, if thy child had lived, it might have made thee the father of a fool, or (that I may speak to the sex that is most unable to bear this trial) the mother of a shame. It is a very ordinary thing for one living child to occasion more trouble than ten dead ones. However, your spiritual interests may be exceedingly injured by the temporal delights which you desire; you may rue what you wish, because it may be an idol, which will render your souls like the "barren heath in the wilderness before the Lord." It was the very direful calamity of the ancient Israelites, in Psalm 106:15. "The Lord gave them their request, but sent leanness into their souls." A lean soul, a wretched soul, a soul pining away in its iniquities, is oftentimes the effect of those fine things which we dote upon. It is a blasted soul that sets up a creature in the room, on the throne of the great God, that gives unto a crea-

ture those affections and cares which are due unto the great God alone. Such idolatry the soul is too frequently by prosperity seduced into. We are told, in Proverbs 1: 32: "The prosperity of fools destroys them;" many a fool is thus destroyed. O fearful case! A full table and a lean soul! A high title and a lean soul! A numerous posterity and a soul even like the kine in Pharaoh's dream! Madness is in our hearts if we tremble not at this; soul calamities are sore calamities.

Let not then the death of your children cause any inconsolable grief. The loss of children, did I say — nay, let me recall so harsh a word. The children we count lost, are not so. The death of our children is not the loss of our children. They are not lost, but given back; they are not lost, but sent before.

COTTON MATHER.

AN INFANT'S DEATH.

"BE — rather than be called — a child of God,"
Death whispered. With assenting nod,
Its head upon its mother's breast,
The baby bowed without demur;
Of the kingdom of the blest
Possessor — not inheritor.

COLERIDGE.

LOVE STRONG IN DEATH.

THE brother of two sisters
Drew painfully his breath;
And a strange fear came o'er him,
For love was strong in death.
The fire of fatal fever
Burned darkly on his cheek;
And often to his mother
He spake, or tried to speak.

He said, "The quiet moonlight,
Beneath the shadowed hill,
Seemed dreaming of good angels,
While all the woods were still:
I felt as if from slumber
I never could awake:
Oh, mother, give me something
To cherish for your sake!

"A cold, dead weight is on me,—
A heavy weight, like lead;
My hands and feet seem sinking
Quite through my little bed!
I am so tired and weary,—
With weariness I ache:
Oh, mother, give me something
To cherish for your sake!

"Some little token give me,
That I may kiss in sleep,
To make me feel I'm near you,
And bless you, though I weep.
My sisters say I'm better —
But, then, their heads they shake:
Oh, mother, give me something
To cherish for your sake!

"Why can't I see the poplars,
Why can't I see the hill,
Where, dreaming of good angels,
The moonbeams lay so still?
Why can't I see *you*, mother?
I surely am awake:
Oh, haste, and give me something
To cherish for your sake!"

The little bosom heaves not:
The fire hath left his cheek:
The one chord — is it broken?
The strong chord — *could* it break?
Ah, yes! the loving spirit
Hath winged its flight away!
The mother and two sisters
Look down on lifeless clay.

EBENEZER ELLIOTT.

WEEP NOT FOR HER.

WEEP not for her! — O she was far too fair,
Too pure to dwell on this guilt-tainted earth!
The sinless glory, and the golden air
Of Zion, seemed to claim her from her birth!
A spirit wandering from its native zone,
Which, soon discovering, took her for its own:
Weep not for her!

Weep not for her! — Her span was like the sky,
Whose thousand stars shine beautiful and bright;
Like flowers that know not what it is to die;
Like long-link'd shadeless months of Polar light;
Like music floating o'er a waveless lake,
While Echo answers from the flowery brake:
Weep not for her!

TO A DEAD CHILD.

CHILD of a day, thou knowest not
The tears that overflow thy urn,
The gushing eyes that read thy lot,
Nor, if thou knowest, couldst return!

And why the wish? The pure and blest
Watch like thy mother o'er thy sleep;
O peaceful night! O envied rest!
Thou wilt not ever see her weep.

THE LOST JEWEL.

Dr. Payson, when engaged in paying pastoral visits to his spiritual flock, happened one day to enter "the house of mourning," and there he found a disconsolate mother, whose darling child had just been "taken from the evil to come," whom he thus addressed: "Suppose, now, some one was making a beautiful crown for you to wear; and you knew it was for you, and that you was to receive it and wear it as soon as it should be done. Now, if the maker of it were to come, and, in order to make the crown more beautiful and splendid, were to take some of your jewels to put into it, should you be sorrowful and unhappy because they were taken away for a little while, when you knew they were gone to make up your crown?"

THE RECEPTION OF TRIALS.

The spirit in which we receive trials either increases or diminishes their bitterness; fortitude and resignation disarm them of their sharpest darts, while anger and vindictiveness only augment their poignancy.

THE DYING CHILD TO ITS MOTHER.

CEASE here longer to detain me,
Fondest mother, drowned in woe;
Now thy kind caresses pain me;
Morn advances — let me go.

See yon orient streak appearing,
Harbinger of endless day;
Hark! a voice, the darkness cheering,
Calls my new-born soul away.

Lately launched, a trembling stranger,
On the world's wild, boisterous flood;
Pierced with sorrows, tossed with danger,
Gladly I return to God.

Now my cries shall cease to grieve thee;
Now my trembling heart find rest;
Kinder arms than thine receive me;
Softer pillow than thy breast.

Weep not o'er these eyes that languish,
Upward turning toward their home;
Raptured they 'll forget all anguish,
While they wait to see thee come.

There, my mother, pleasures centre,
Weeping, parting, care or wo
Ne'er our Father's house shall enter;
Morn advances — let me go.

As through this calm, peaceful dawning,
Silent glides my parting breath,
To an everlasting morning,
Gently close my eyes in death.

Blessings endless, richest blessings,
Pour their streams upon thy heart!
Though no language yet possessing,
Breathes my spirit ere we part.

Yet to leave thee sorrowing rends me,
Though again his voice I hear;
Rise! may every grace attend thee;
Rise! and seek to meet me there.

THE TRUE CONSOLER.

Oh! there is never sorrow of heart
That shall lack a timely end,
If but to God we turn and ask
Of him to be our friend!

WORDSWORTH.

THE LAMB WITHOUT.

WHENE'ER I close the door at night,
And turn the creaking key about,
A pang renewed assails my heart —
I think my darling is shut out;

Think that, beneath these starry skies
He wanders, with his little feet;
The pines stand hushed in glad surprise,
The garden yields its tribute sweet.

Through every well-known path and nook
I see his angel footsteps glide,
As guileless as the Pascal Lamb
That kept the infant Saviour's side.

His earnest eye, perhaps, can pierce
The gloom in which his parents sit;
He wonders what has changed the house,
And why the cloud hangs over it.

He passes with a pensive smile, —
Why do they linger to grow old,
And what the burthen on their hearts?
On *him* shall sorrow have no hold.

Within the darkened porch I stand—
Scarce knowing why, I linger long;
O, could I call thee back to me,
Bright bird of heaven, with sooth or song!

But no—the wayworn wretch shall pause
To bless the shelter of this door;
Kinsman and guest shall enter in,
But my lost darling, never more.

Yet, waiting on his gentle ghost,
From sorrow's void, so deep and dull,
Comes a faint breathing of delight,
A presence calm and beautiful.

I have him, not in outstretched arms,
I hold him, not with straining sight,
While in blue depths of quietude
Drops, like a star, my still "Good-night."

Thus, nightly, do I bow my head
To the unseen, eternal Force;
Asking sweet pardon of my child,
For yielding him in death's divorce.

He turned away from childlike plays,
His baby toys he held in scorn;
He loved the forms of thought divine,
Woods, flowers, and fields of waving corn.

And then I knew my little one
Should by no vulgar love be taught;
But by the symbols God has given
To solemnize our common thought;

The mystic angels, three in one,
The circling serpent's faultless round,
And, in far glory dim, the Cross,
Where Love o'erleaps the human bound.

MRS. HOWE.

DEATH OF THE YOUNG.

OH! it is hard to take
The lesson that such deaths will teach,
But let no man reject it,
For it is one that all must learn,
And it is a mighty universal truth,
When death strikes down the innocent and young.
For every fragile form from which he lets
The parting spirit free,
A hundred virtues rise,
In shapes of mercy, charity, and love,
To walk the world and bless it.
Of every tear
That sorrowing mortals shed on such green graves,
Some good is born, some gentler nature comes.

DICKENS.

GOD SHIELD THEE, CHILDLESS MOTHER.

YOUNG mother! what can feeble friendship say,
To soothe the anguish of this mournful day?
They, they alone, whose hearts like thine have bled,
Know how the living sorrow for the dead;
Each tutored voice, that seeks such grief to cheer,
Strikes cold upon the weeping parent's ear;
I've felt it all, — alas! too well I know
How vain all earthly power to hush thy woe!
God cheer thee, childless mother! 't is not given
For man to ward the blow that falls from heaven.

I've felt it all — as thou art feeling now;
Like thee, with stricken heart and aching brow,
I've sat and watched by dying beauty's bed,
And burning tears of hopeless anguish shed;
I've gazed upon the sweet but pallid face,
And vainly tried some comfort there to trace;
I've listened to the short and struggling breath;
I've seen the cherub eye grow dim in death;
Like thee, I've veiled my head in speechless gloom,
And laid my first-born in the silent tomb.

CHARLES SPRAGUE.

THE LOST DARLING.

SHE was my idol. Night and day to scan
The fine expression of her form, and mark
The unfolding mind like vernal rose-bud start
To sudden beauty, was my chief delight.
To find her fairy footsteps following me,
Her hand upon my garments, or her lip
Close sealed to mine, and in the watch of night
The quiet breath of innocence to feel
Soft on my cheek, was such a full content
Of happiness as none but mothers know.

Her voice was like some tiny harp that yields
To the light-fingered breeze; and as it held
Brief converse with her doll, or kindly soothed
Her moaning kitten, or with patient care
Conned o'er the alphabet — but most of all
Its tender cadence in her evening prayer —
Thrilled on the ear like some ethereal tone
Heard in sweet dreams. But now alone I sit,
Musing of her, and dew with mournful tears
The little robes that once with woman's pride
I wrought, as if there were a need to deck
A being formed so beautiful. I start,
Half fancying from her empty crib there comes

A restless sound, and breathe the accustomed
words —
" Hush, hush, Louisa, dearest!" — then I weep,
As though it were a sin to speak to one
Whose home is with the angels.

Gone to God!
And yet I wish I had not seen the pang
That wrung her features, nor the ghostly white
Setting around her lips. I would that heaven
Had taken its own, like some transplanted
flower,
In all its bloom and freshness.

Gone to God!
Be still, my heart! What could a mother's
prayer,
In all the wildest ecstasy of hope,
Ask for its darling like the bliss of heaven?

MRS. L. H. SIGOURNEY.

"LENT — NOT GIVEN."

GOD takes the beautiful, the best;
They are but lent, not given:
He sets " His jewels" on His breast,
That they may shine in heaven.

LITTLE CHARLIE.

O SUNSHINE, making golden spots
  Upon the carpet at my feet—
The shadows of the coming flowers!
The phantoms of forget-me-nots
  And roses red and sweet!—
How can you seem so full of joy,
  And we so sad at heart and sore?—
Angel of death! again thy wings
  Are folded at our door!

We can but yearn through length of days
  For something lost we fancied ours:
We 'll miss thee, darling, when the spring
  Has touched the world to flowers!
For thou wast like that dainty month
  Which strews the violets at its feet:
Thy life was slips of golden sun
  And silver tear-drops braided sweet!
For thou wast light and thou wast shade,
And thine were sweet capricious ways!—
  Now lost in purple languors, now
No bird in ripe red summer days
  Was half as wild as thou!

O little presence! everywhere
We find some touching trace of thee—
A pencil mark upon the wall
That "naughty hands" made thoughtlessly:
And broken toys around the house—
Where he has left them they have lain,
Waiting for little busy hands
That will not come again,—
Will never come again!

Within the shrouded room below
He lies a-cold—and yet we know
It is *not* Charlie there!
It is not Charlie, cold and white,
It is the robe, that, in his flight,
He gently cast aside!
Our darling hath not died!

O rare pale lips! O clouded eyes!
O violet eyes grown dim!
Ah, well, this little lock of hair
Is all of him!
Is all of him that we can keep
For loving kisses, and the thought
Of him and death may teach us more
Than all our life hath taught!

God, walking over starry spheres,
  Did clasp his tiny hand,
And led him, through a fall of tears,
  Into the mystic land!

Angel of death! we question not:
  Who asks of heaven, "Why does it rain?"
Angel! we bless thee, for thy kiss
  Hath hushed the lips of Pain!
No "Wherefore?" or "To what good end?"
  Shall out of doubt and anguish creep
Into our thought. We bow our heads:
  He giveth His beloved sleep!

T. B. ALDRICH.

DEATH WITHOUT ITS STING.

MOURN not o'er early graves — for those
  Removed whilst only buds are shown,
For God, who sowed and watered, knows
  The time to gather in his own.

This blossom knows no winter's breath,
  Sheltered beneath the Almighty wing;
And though it felt the *stroke* of death,
  Blest babe! it never knew its *sting*.

HOUSEHOLD DIRGE.

I've lost my little May at last!
  She perished in the spring,
When earliest flowers began to bud,
  And earliest birds to sing;
I laid her in a country grave,
  A rural, soft retreat:
A marble tablet at her head,
  And violets at her feet.

I would that she were back again,
  In all her childish bloom;
My joy and hope have followed her,
  My heart is in the tomb!
I know that she is gone away,
  I know that she is fled;
I miss her everywhere, and yet
  I cannot make her dead!

I wake the children up at dawn,
  And say a simple prayer,
And draw them round the morning meal,
  But one is wanting there!
I see a little chair apart,
  A little pinafore,
And memory fills the vacancy,
  As time will — never more!

I sit within my room and write,
The lone and weary hours,
And miss the little maid again
Among the window flowers;
And miss her with the toys beside
My desk, in silent play;
And then I turn and look for her,
But she has flown away.

I drop my idle pen and hark,
And catch the faintest sound;
She must be playing hide-and-seek
In shady nooks around;
She 'll come and climb my chair again,
And peep my shoulder o'er;
I hear a stifled laugh — but no,
She cometh never more!

I waited only yesternight,
The evening service read,
And lingered for my idol's kiss,
Before she went to bed;
Forgetting she had gone before,
In slumbers soft and sweet:
A monument above her head,
And violets at her feet!

R. H. STODDARD.

LINKS IN THE HEAVENLY CHAIN.

THERE is something pleasing in this fact: that every infant that you lose is a link that binds you to the grave on the one hand, and a link also that binds you to eternity on the other. A portion of yourself has taken possession of the tomb, to remind you that you must lie down there. A soul that was related to yourself has taken possession of eternity, to remind you that you must enter there. Our bodies are, through our infants, in communion with the dust; and our spirits, through theirs, with the everlasting throne. We are so disposed to strike our roots into this fading and fainting earth, that it becomes mercy on the part of God to send those chastisements, which loosen our affections from a world doomed to flame. Each infant that we lose is a tie (holy and happy truth!) less to bind us to this world, and a tie more to bind our hearts to that better world where our infants have preceded us. It is thus God gradually loosens the tree before it falls. Death thus loses half its pain before it overtakes us. Happy truth, if we realize it! Happy lesson, if we feel it!

Good and gracious is that Father, who thus preaches to His people from the infant's bier, when they will not learn the lesson which they need from His ambassadors in the pulpit!

THE MINISTERING ANGEL.

MOTHER, has the dove that nestled
  Lovingly upon thy breast,
Folded up his little pinion,
  And in darkness gone to rest?
Nay, the grave is dark and dreary,
  But the lost one is not there;
Hear'st thou not its gentle whisper,
  Floating on the ambient air?
It is near thee, gentle mother,
  Near thee at the evening hour;
Its soft kiss is in the zephyr,
  It looks up from every flower.
And when, Night's dark shadows fleeing,
  Low thou bendest thee in prayer,
And thy heart feels nearest heaven,
  Then thy angel babe is there!

MRS. EMILY JUDSON

THE OPEN WINDOW.

THE old house by the lindens
Stood silent in the shade,
And on the gravelled pathway
The light and shadow played.

I saw the nursery windows
Wide open to the air;
But the faces of the children,
They were no longer there.

The large Newfoundland house-dog
Was standing by the door;
He looked for his little playmates,
Who would return no more.

They walked not under the lindens,
They played not in the hall:
But shadow, and silence, and sadness
Where hanging over all.

The birds sang in the branches,
With sweet, familiar tone;
But the voices of the children
Will be heard in dreams alone!

And the boy that walked beside me,
He could not understand
Why closer in mine, ah! closer,
I pressed his warm, soft hand!

LONGFELLOW.

CHILDREN ENTERING HEAVEN.

WHO are they whose little feet,
Pacing life's dark journey through,
Now have reached that heavenly seat
They had ever kept in view?
"I from Greenland's frozen land;"
"I from India's sultry plain;"
"I from Afric's barren sand;"
"I from islands of the main."
"All our earthly journey past,
Every tear and pain gone by,
Here together met at last
At the portals of the sky;
Each the welcome 'COME' awaits,
Conquerors over death and sin!"
Lift your heads, ye golden gates,
Let the little travellers in.

EDMONDSON.

ON SEEING AN INFANT PREPARED FOR THE GRAVE.

Go to thy sleep, my child,
Go to thy dreamless bed,
Gentle and undefiled,
With blessings on thy head;
Fresh roses in thy hand,
Buds on thy pillow laid, —
Haste from this fearful land,
Where flowers so quickly fade.

Before thy heart had learned
In waywardness to stray,
Before thy feet had turned
The dark and downward way;
Ere sin had seared thy breast,
Or sorrow woke the tear,
Rise to thy home of rest
In yon celestial sphere.

Because thy smile was fair,
Thy lip and eye so bright;
Because thy cradle-care
Was such a fond delight,
Shall Love, with weak embrace,
Thy outspread wing detain?
No! — Angel, seek thy place
Amid the cherub train.

MRS. L. H. SIGOURNEY.

THE LITTLE BOY THAT DIED.

I AM all alone in my chamber now,
And the midnight hour is near,
And the fagot's crack, and the clock's dull tick,
Are the only sounds I hear;
And over my soul, in its solitude,
Sweet feelings of sadness glide;
For my heart and my eyes are full, when I think
Of the little boy that died.

I went one night to my father's house —
Went home to the dear ones all,
And softly I opened the garden gate,
And softly the door of the hall.
My mother came out to meet her son,
She kissed me, and then she sighed,
And her head fell on my neck, and she wept
For her little boy that died.

And when I gazed on his innocent face,
As still and cold he lay,
And thought what a lovely child he had been,
And how soon he must decay;
"Oh death, thou lovest the beautiful,"
In the woe of my spirit I cried,
For sparkled the eyes, and the forehead was fair,
Of the little boy that died!

Again I will go to my father's house
Go home to the dear ones all,
And sadly I 'll open the garden gate,
And sadly the door of the hall.
I shall meet my mother, but never more
With her darling by her side;
But she 'll kiss me, and sigh and weep again
For the little boy that died.

I shall miss him when the flowers come
In the garden where he played;
I shall miss him more by the fire-side,
When the flowers have all decayed.
I shall see his toys and his empty chair,
And the horse he used to ride;
And they will speak, with a silent speech,
Of the little boy that died.

I shall see his little sister again
With her playmates about the door,
And I 'll watch the children in their sports,
As I never did before;
And if in the group I see a child
That 's dimpled and laughing-eye
I 'll look to see if it may not be
The little boy that died.

We shall all go home to our Father's house—
To our Father's house in the skies,
Where the hope of our soul shall have no blight,
And our love no broken ties;
We shall roam on the banks of the River of Peace,
And bathe in its blissful tide:
And one of the joys of our heaven shall be
The little boy that died!

And, therefore, when I am sitting alone,
And the midnight hour is near,
When the fagot's crack and the clock's dull tick
Are the only sounds I hear,—
Oh sweet o'er my soul in its solitude
Are the feelings of sadness that glide;
Though my heart and my eyes are full, when I think
Of the little boy that died.

JOSHUA D. ROBINSON.

OH! the lost, the unforgotten,
Though the world be oft forgot;
Oh! the shrouded and the lonely,
In our hearts they perish not.

KITTIE IS GONE.

The following beautiful and touching prose-poem was written by Mr. WILLIAM B. BRADBURY, the musical composer, on the death of his daughter, aged five years and seventeen days.

KITTIE is gone. Where? To heaven. An angel came, and took her away. She was a lovely child—gentle as a lamb; the pet of the whole family; the youngest of them all. But she could not stay with us any longer. She had an angel-sister in heaven, who was waiting for her. The angel-sister was with us only a few months, but she has been in heaven many years, and she must have loved Kittie, for everybody loved her. The loveliest flowers are often soonest plucked. If a little voice sweeter and more musical than others was heard, I knew Kittie was near. If my study-door opened so gently and slyly that no sound could be heard, I knew Kittie was coming. If after an hour's quiet play, a little shadow passed me, and the door opened and shut as no one else could open and shut it, "so as not to disturb papa," I knew Kittie was going. When, in the midst of my composing, I heard a gentle voice saying, "Papa, may I stay with you

a little while? I will be *very* still," I did not need to look off my work, to assure me that it was my little lamb. You staid with me too long, Kittie dear, to leave me so suddenly; and you are *too still* now. You became my little assistant — my home-angel — my youngest and sweetest singing-bird, and I miss the little voice that I have heard in an adjoining room, catching up and echoing little snatches of melody as they were being composed. I miss those soft and sweet kisses. I miss the little hand that was always first to be placed upon my forehead, to "drive away the pain." I miss the sound of those little feet upon the stairs. I miss the little knock at my bed-room door in the morning, and the triple good-night kiss in the evening. I miss the sweet smiles from the sunniest of faces. I miss — oh! how I miss the foremost in the little group who came out to meet me at the gate for the first kiss. I do not stoop so low now, Kittie, to give that first kiss. I miss you at the table, and at family worship. I miss your voice in "*I want to be an angel*," for nobody could sing it like you. I miss you in my rides and walks. I miss you in the garden. I miss you everywhere; but I will try not to miss you in heaven. "Papa, if we are good, will an angel truly come and take

us to heaven when we die?" When the question was asked, how little did I think the angel was so near! But he did "truly" come, and the sweet flower is translated to a more genial clime. "I do wish papa would come." Wait a little while, Kittie, and papa will come. The journey is not long. He will soon be "home."

MINISTERING SPIRITS.

It is a beautiful belief,
  That ever round our head
Are hovering on noiseless wing
  The spirits of the dead.
It is a beautiful belief,
  When ended our career,
That it will be our ministry
  To watch o'er others here;
To lend a moral to the flower,
  Breathe wisdom on the wind,
To hold commune at night's lone hour,
  With the imprisoned mind;
To bid the mourner cease to mourn,
  The trembling be forgiven;
To bear away from ills of clay,
  The infant to its heaven.

THE WINTER BURIAL.

Composed on the burial of a child in a grave three feet deep in the snow.

Our baby lies under the snow, sweet wife,
Our baby lies under the snow;
Out in the dark with the night,
While the winds so loudly blow.

Shall we shut the baby out, sweet wife,
While the chilling winds do blow?
O, the grave is now its bed,
And its coverlet is snow.

O, our merry bird is soared, sweet wife,
That a rain of music gave!
And the snow falls on our hearts,
And our hearts are each a grave.

O, she was the lamp of our life, sweet wife,
Blown out in a night of gloom!
A leaf from our flower of love,
Nipped in its fresh spring bloom.

But the lamp will shine above, sweet wife,
And the leaf again will grow,
Where there are no bitter winds,
And no dreary, dreary snow.

SHELDON CHADWICK.

A MOTHER'S LAMENT FOR THE DEATH OF HER SON.

FATE gave the word, the arrow sped,
And pierced the darling's heart;
And with him all the joys are fled,
Life can to me impart.
By cruel hands the sapling drops,
In dust dishonored laid:
So fell the pride of all my hopes,
My age's future shade.

The mother-linnet in the brake
Bewails her ravished young;
So I, for my lost darling's sake,
Lament the live day long.
Death, oft I 've fear'd thy fatal blow,
Now, fond I bare my breast;
O, do thou kindly lay me low
With him I love, at rest!

ROBERT BURNS.

There is a voice which sorrow hears,
When heaviest weighs life's galling chain;
'T is heaven that whispers — dry thy tears,
The pure in heaven shall meet again.

THE INFANT SPIRIT'S PRAYER.

Addressed to a lady who had lost her Husband and Child.

SILENCE filled the courts of heaven, hushed
were angel harp and tone,
While a little new-born spirit knelt before the
eternal throne.
As his small white hands were lifted, clasped as
if in earnest prayer,
And his voice in low, sweet murmurs rose like
music on the air.
Light from the full fount of glory on his robes
of whiteness glistened,
And the bright-winged seraphs round him bowed
their radiant heads and listened.

"Lord, from thy world of glory here,
My heart turns fondly to another:
O Lord, our God! the Comforter,
Comfort, comfort my sweet mother!
Many sorrows hast thou sent her,
Meekly hath she drained the cup,
And the jewels thou hast lent her,
Unrepining, yielded up:
Comfort, comfort my sweet mother!

" Earth is growing lonely round her,
Friend and lover hast thou taken ;
Let her not, though clouds surround her,
Feel herself by Thee forsaken.
Let her think, while faint and weary,
We are waiting for her here ;
Let each thought that makes earth dreary
Make the thought of heaven more dear.

" Saviour, Thou, in nature human,
Dwelt on earth a little child,
Pillowed on the breast of woman,
Blessed Mary, undefiled.
Thou, who from thy cross of suffering
Viewed thy mother's tearful face,
And bequeathed her to thy loved one,
Bidding him to fill thy place,
Comfort, comfort my sweet mother !

" Thou, who, from the heavens descending,
Tears, and woes, and suffering won ;
Thou, who, nature's laws suspending,
Gave the widow back her son ;
Thou, who at the grave of Lazarus
Wept with those who wept their dead;
Thou, who once in mortal anguish
Bowed thine own anointed head, —
Comfort, comfort my sweet mother !

The dove-like murmer died away upon the
evening air,
Yet still the little suppliant knelt, with hands
still clasped in prayer ;
Still were the softly-pleading eyes turned to the
sapphire throne,
While angel harp and angel voice rang out in
mingling tone.
And as the choral numbers swelled by angel
voices given,
High, loud and clear the anthem rolled through
all the courts of heaven.
" He is the widow's God," it said, " who spared
not his own Son."
The infant spirit bowed its head, — " Thy will,
O God, be done ! "

A MEMORY.

HER memory still within my mind
Retains its sweetest power;
It is the perfume left behind
That whispers of the flower.

MRS. WELBY.

THE CROCUS.

BENEATH the sunny autumn sky,
With gold leaves dropping round,
We sought, my little friend and I,
The consecrated ground,
Where calm beneath the holy cross,
O'ershadowed by sweet skies,
Sleeps tranquilly that youthful form,
Those blue, unclouded eyes.

Around the soft green swelling mound
We scooped the earth away,
And buried deep the crocus bulbs
Against a coming day.
"These roots are dry, and brown, and sere,
Why plant them here?" he said,
"To leave them all the winter long
So desolate and dead."

"Dear child, within each sere dead form
There sleeps a living flower,
And angel-like it shall arise
In spring's returning hour."
Ah, deeper down — cold, dark, and chill,
We buried our heart's flower,
But angel-like shall he arise
In spring's immortal hour.

In blue and yellow from its grave
  Springs up the crocus fair,
And God shall raise those bright blue eyes,
  Those sunny waves of hair.
Not for a fading summer's morn,
  Not for a fleeting hour,
But for an endless age of bliss,
  Shall rise our heart's dear flower.

MRS. H. B. STOWE.

A DIRGE.

CALM on the bosom of thy God,
  Young spirit! rest thee now;
Even while with us thy footstep trod
  His seal was on thy brow.

Dust, to its narrow house beneath!
  Soul, to its place on high!—
They that have seen thy look in death,
  No more may fear to die.

Lone are the paths, and sad the bowers,
  Whence thy meek smile is gone;
But oh! a brighter home than ours
  In heaven is now thine own.

FELICIA HEMANS.

TO A BEREAVED FATHER.

I CANNOT, I dare not say, weep not. Jesus wept at the grave of Lazarus, and surely, he allows you to weep; surely, there is a "needs be" that you feel a heaviness under such a trial. But O, let hope and joy mitigate your heaviness. I know not how this, or a former trial, shall work for your good, but it is enough that God knows. He that said, "All things shall work together for good to them that love God," excepts not from this promise the sorest trial. You devoted your son to God; you cannot doubt that he accepted the surrender. If he has been hid in the chamber of the grave from the evil of sin, and from the evil of suffering, let not your eye be evil, when God is good. What you chiefly wished for him, and prayed on his behalf, was spiritual and heavenly blessings. If the greatest thing you wished for is accomplished, at the season and in the manner Infinite Wisdom saw best, refuse not to be comforted; you know not what work and joy have been waiting for him in that world, where God's "servants shall serve him." Should you sorrow immoderately when you have such

ground of hope that he, and his other parent, are rejoicing in what you lament? I know that nature will feel; and I believe suppressing its emotions in such cases is not profitable, either to soul or body; but, I trust, though you mourn, God will keep you from murmuring, and that you shall have to glory in your tribulation and infirmity, while the power of Christ is manifested thereby.

ERSKINE.

THE DEATH LULLABY.

SLEEP, baby, sleep!
Once more upon my breast
Thine aching head shall rest,
In quiet sleep.
Sleep, baby, sleep!
Sweetly thine eye is closing,
Calmly thou 'rt now reposing,
In slumber deep.
Sleep, angel baby, sleep!
Not in thy cradle bed
Shall rest thy little head,
But with the quiet dead,
In dreamless sleep.

THE ALPINE SHEEP.

After our child's untroubled breath
Up to the Father took its way,
And on our home the shade of death
Like a long twilight haunting lay,

And friends came round with us to weep
Her little spirit's swift remove,
This story of the Alpine sheep
Was told to us by one we love: —

"They, in the valley's sheltering care,
Soon crop the meadow's tender prime,
And when the sod grows brown and bare,
The shepherd strives to make them climb,

"To airy shelves of pastures green,
That hang along the mountain's side,
Where grass and flowers together lean,
And down through mist the sunbeams slide.

"But naught can tempt the timid things
That steep and rugged path to try,
Though sweet the shepherd calls and sings,
And seared below the pastures lie, —

"Till in his arms their lambs he takes,
Along the dizzy verge to go,
Then, heedless of the lifts and breaks,
They follow on o'er rocks and snow.

"And in those pastures lifted fair,
More dewy soft than lowland mead,
The shepherd drops his tender care,
And sheep and lambs together feed."

This parable, by nature breathed,
Blew on me as the south-wind free
O'er frozen brooks that float unsheathed
From icy thraldom to the sea.

A blissful vision through the night
Would all my happy senses sway,
Of the good shepherd on the height,
Or climbing up the stony way.

Holding *our* little lamb asleep;
And, like the burden of the sea,
Sounded that voice along the deep,
Saying, "*Arise, and follow me.*"

MRS. MARIA LOWELL.

THE DEATH OF A DAUGHTER.

THE sweetest voice is hushed,
The loveliest smile is gone;
The foot of Death has crushed
My child — my dearest one.
Was there no other place to tread,
That he must trample on thy head?

That foot is on my heart,
With all its fatal weight
It mangles every part,
And lays me desolate;
The pain of more than death is mine,
The lighter pang, dear child, was thine

How drear the household hearth!
How dark is every room!
There is no light on earth,
To dissipate the gloom.
Before we prized them, joys are fled, —
Tears for the living — not the dead.

Away beyond the tomb,
Sweet spirit, thou art flown,
Where loveliness can bloom,
And blighting is unknown;
My faith would trace thine upward way,
And catch of heaven some cheering ray.

One short and happy year
Thou smiled'st on us below;
We hoped to keep thee here
Till we were called to go;
But God takes back the blessings lent,
Though we our weaker claims present.

To thee it was not given
To speak with mortal tongue;
The dialect of heaven
Already hast thou sung.
Too hard our speech — too slow our ways;
Angels must teach thee words of praise.

What we cannot discern,
Thine eyes can plainly see;
How much have we to learn,
If we would equal thee!
Thine infant spirit near the throne,
Excels all mind that Earth hath known.

Our selfish hearts had bound thee
To hold thee back from bliss;
Now glory beams around thee
In brighter worlds than this.
Farewell, till guardian angels come
To bear us to thy happy home.

REV. DUDLEY PHELPS.

THE SPHERE OF CHILDREN IN HEAVEN.

DOES it not cast a nameless charm around an early death, to consider how entirely hidden from a child are all the black spots in this world of sin? Escaping not only the pollution of the world, but the knowledge that it exists — being old enough to trust the Saviour, though too young to know the dire effects of sin — they experience just enough of the evil of the fall to bring them in as subjects of the redemption. The little ones of Christ's flock are taken to the heavenly fold without coming into open contact with the destroyer of souls, and ere he has had time to spread his gilded baits before their eyes. The "depths of Satan" — those mysteries of evil by which he enslaves millions of victims — are all unknown to them. They have never been bound down by the iron chain of habit. Nor have they encountered temptations demanding a constant warfare, as those who have come to mature years, and who may have received the largest measures of the Spirit, know to their cost. *Are they not then qualified for a different mission in the economy of the kingdom of heaven, and for holding a different place in the glorified company* — even as those who have endured a

great fight of afflictions and been pre-eminent exhibitions of God's grace are thereby fitted for a higher sphere? May we not suppose that their Father in heaven, who early transplants so many of these little ones thither, has some special design to serve — some work for them in His house above — "for of such is the kingdom of heaven?"

THE WAY HOME.

THE CHILD-ANGEL.

WITH what unknown delight the mother smiled,
When this frail treasure in her arms she pressed!
Her prayer was heard, — she clasped a living child, —
But how the gift transcends the poor request!
A child was all she asked, with many a vow;
Mother, behold the child an angel now!

Now in her Father's house she finds a place;
Or, if to earth she take a transient flight,
'T is to fulfil the purpose of His grace,
To guide thy footsteps to the world of light; —
A ministering spirit sent to thee,
That where she is, there thou may'st also be.

JANE TAYLOR.

BABIE BELL.

HAVE you not heard the poet tell
How came the dainty Babie Bell
Into this world of ours?
The gates of heaven were left ajar:
With folded hands and dreamy eyes
She wandered out of Paradise!
She saw this planet, like a star,
Hung in the depths of purple even —
Its bridges, running to and fro,
O'er which the white-winged seraphs go,
Bearing the holy dead to heaven!
She touched a bridge of flowers — those feet,
So light they did not bend the bells
Of the celestial asphodels!
They fell like dew upon the flowers!
And all the air grew strangely sweet!
And thus came dainty Babie Bell
Into this world of ours!

She came, and brought delicious May!
The swallows built beneath the eaves;
Like sunbeams in and out the leaves,
The robbins went, the live-long day:
The lily swung its noiseless bell,

And o'er the porch the trembling vine
Seemed bursting with its veins of wine!—
O, earth was full of pleasant smell,
When came the dainty Babie Bell
Into this world of ours!

O Babie, dainty Babie Bell!
How fair she grew from day to day!
What woman-nature filled her eyes,
What poetry within them lay!
Those deep and tender twilight eyes,
So full of meaning, pure and bright,
As if she yet stood in the light
Of those oped gates of Paradise!
And we loved Babie more and more:
O never in our hearts before
Such holy love was born:
We felt we had a link between
This real world and that unseen —
The land of deathless morn!
And for the love of those dear eyes,
For love of her whom God led forth —
The mother's being ceased on earth
When Babie came from Paradise!
For love of Him who smote our lives,
And woke the chords of joy and pain,
We said, "Sweet Christ!"—our hearts bent down
Like violets after rain!

And now the orchards which were once
All white and rosy in their bloom —
Filling the crystal heart of air
With gentle pulses of perfume —
Were thick with yellow, juicy fruit;
The plums were globes of honey rare,
And soft-cheeked peaches blushed and fell!
The grapes were purpling in the grange;
And Time wrought just as rich a change
In little Babie Bell!
Her *petit* form more perfect grew,
And in her features we could trace,
In softened curves, her mother's face:
Her angel-nature ripened too.
We thought her lovely when she came,
But she was holy, saintly now * * * *
Around her pale and lofty brow
We thought we saw a ring of flame!

Sometimes she said a few strange words,
Whose meanings lay beyond our reach:
God's hand hath taken off the seal
Which held the portals of her speech!
She never was a child to us;
We never held her being's key!
We could not teach her holy things:
She was Christ's self in purity!

It came upon us by degrees:
We saw its shadow ere it fell,
The knowledge that our God had sent
His messenger for Babie Bell!
We shuddered with unlanguaged pain,
And all our thoughts ran into tears!
And all our hopes were changed to fears—
The sunshine into dismal rain!
Aloud we cried in our belief:—
"O smite us gently, gently, God!
Teach us to bend and kiss the rod,
And perfect grow through grief!"
Ah, how we loved her, God can tell;
Her little heart was cased in ours—
They 're broken caskets — Babie Bell!
At last he came, the messenger,
The messenger from unseen lands:
And what did dainty Babie Bell?
She only crossed her little hands!
She only looked more meek and fair!
We parted back her silken hair;
We laid some buds upon her brow—
Death's bride arrayed in flowers!
And thus went dainty Babie Bell
Out of this world of ours!

T. B. ALDRICH.

THE BOY'S LAST WORDS.

A mother, in giving an account of the death of her son, a promising boy of fourteen, relates the following beautiful incident:

I WAS watching by his side the last night of his sickness, when he reached for my hand, and with the tone and emphasis of the deepest meaning, and which showed he was giving unpremeditated expression to his feelings, he said, pausing between his sentences to recover breath:

"Give me your hand, dear mother,
And come to my beautiful home!
I 'm going, I 'm almost there —
Only this narrow bridge to pass —
From a dark world of sorrow and toil and care,
To a world of glory all bright and fair.
Oh! come with me now, it 's a beautiful home,
You are sick, dear mother, and faint and alone.
Oh! why will you stay? — I 'm going now;
There is no sin there, nor death, nor woe;
Oh! promise me, mother, and let us go.
Come, come, oh, dear mother, come!"

I have given his words just as he spoke them. Their poetical form can be accounted for from the fact that he occasionally wrote rhymes; and is not poetry the natural language of deep emotion?

THE DEATH AND BURIAL.

SHE was not quite one year old. I cannot venture to describe her. My heart swells, and is ready to break, at the thought of some sweet, touching feature, some winning way, the posture and motion of her hands or feet, her inarticulate noises with her lips, and pressure of her mouth against our cheeks, that being as far as she had advanced in kissing. Sights of her asleep, when her mother and I stood over her with lamp in hand, are as deeply stamped on my mind as views in the Alps. I could tell you every dimple which we detected as she lay on her back, a knee or arm disengaged from her clothing. All her mimicry of sounds and motions, and her little feats, which astonished herself and made us shout; her morning bath, she a little image, with her very straight back, plashing the water with her feet; and other nameless things, raise the question, and leave it in doubt, whether I wish there were more of them to remember, or whether it is well for me that she had been developed no more. Human bliss arrives at perfection as frequently in such scenes and experiences, as when we have made calculations for happiness; indeed we are never more happy than during

the little sudden tournaments of love with a young child; and the man who has a wife and child, supplying him with these inadvertent pleasures, will find in the retrospect that he was most happy when he least suspected it. To know when we have in possession the means of true happiness, and to rejoice in it, and feel satisfied, is rare. Would that I had thought more of this when my little child was with me.

Sometimes I looked at her with a feeling of awe. Mine, indeed she was; but in what a subordinate sense! That perfect frame, that wondrous mind, that immortal destiny, often made me shrink into nothingness at the contemplation of her,—feeling that God, in making her, had rolled a sphere into an orbit which is measureless, making it touch mine, but having a path of its own, which cannot be comprehended in that of another, not even in that of the earthly parent. I was glad that there was an infinite God to possess this infinite treasure and control it; for it was too much for me. My enjoyment of her was often overshadowed by these thoughts. Still she was to be a perfect joy. Her beautifully unfolding life left me nothing to desire

But the destroyer came. It had been an ex-

ceedingly hot summer, and cholera infantum began to waste the little face and frame. We saw that she must die; we nevertheless maintained a cheerfulness of feeling which afterward seemed to us unnatural; but no doubt it was kindly given, to bear us through the trial. The last night that she was put to rest, her symptoms were favorable; but, early in the morning, the nurse whispered to me that the child "looked strange," and she led my way to the nursery. The little patient lay with her hand under her cheek, her eyes were raised and fixed on the wall. I supposed that she was watching a shadow, and I spoke to her by name. She did not move, nor did she turn her eyes; I spoke again, and kissed her; it was in vain; the fearful truth flashed upon me that she was convulsed. We watched her till sundown, when she ceased to breathe.

I fear that some of you will smile, if I say she seemed to me the sweetest little thing that ever died; that, as she lay in her last sleep, no sight could be quite so beautiful and touching; that the loss of a child never, probably, awoke such tenderness of love and such grief. Suffer me at least to think so, without debate.

How can I tell you anything about the last sad scene at the grave? Enough to say that

each of us kissed the sweet face; we gazed on her a few moments, while tears ran down; and some things were uttered, between speaking and crying, till at length her mother kneeled, and held her face near the little face, for a few moments, without a sound; then drew the white embroidered blanket over the little thing, for it was a cold day: and thus the last "Now I lay me down to sleep" seemed to be said and heard. I closed the lid. "Lieth down and riseth not, till the heavens be no more;" — what shall I have seen and known before I see this face again! That simple thing, the closing of the lid, what a world of meaning was in it! My thoughts were making a whirlpool about me, till my eye was taken by the nearer approach of a man, in his shirt-sleeves and rough working garb, who respectfully seemed to intimate, We are ready, Sir, when you are. O must we, must we part? Must the grave have her? With an effort, I said, "Thy will be done." I turned the key, and took it out of the lock, and understood how even good men could have opened their mouths, at certain times, against the day of their birth. We waited. In a few moments, one more little mound grew up from the earth; the clods of the valley had become sweet to one more father and mother.

We rode away. I was glad that the horses started off so fast, though, for the first moment, it shocked me. I was expecting to move away at the slow, solemn pace with which we came.

Turning a corner in the cemetery, a little stone over a little grave, the only one in the enclosure, caught my eye, as we drove past, with this inscription: CHARLIE. Ah, is Charlie dead? I felt very sorry. Who Charlie was, I did not know; but his father, I thought, had been there on an errand like mine. Had I met him in the street, on my way home, some one pointing him out to me, I would have stopped him, and told him what I had seen, and that Agnes was dead. For a moment, the stream of my grief was broken and divided by that little headstone, as a great river is divided by the delta at its mouth; but it came together again very soon.

AGNES AND THE LITTLE KEY.

THEY only truly mourn the dead, who endeavor so to live as to insure a reunion in heaven.

BABY'S DEAD.

One day I chanced to meet,
In the street,
A pretty little child
Crying bitterly and wild;
"What ails the little one?" said I
Sobbingly he made reply,
As he raised his curly head,
"Baby's dead!"

"Nay, my darling, do not weep,
Baby's only gone to sleep;
He will soon wake up again!"
But my words were all in vain;
"He has never slept so long;
He is gone, forever gone;
For, kind sir, my mother said
"Baby's dead!"

Then I took him by the hand,
Strove to make him understand
How far happier than we
Baby was with Deity!
But 't was throwing words away,
For, ever and anon, he 'd say,
As he, weeping, raised his head,
"Baby's dead!"

So within these hearts of ours,
In life's later, autumn hours,
Stricken hopes like withered flowers
Rustle as we tread:
When some favorite wish is crossed,
Or some cherished hope is lost,
To our souls all tempest-tossed,
"Baby 's dead!"

Kindly words and gentle deeds,
To the heart that inly bleeds,
Bring but little consolation
To the spirit's desolation;
If, for aye, sweet Hope hath fled,
"Baby 's dead!"
Forever dead!

RICHARD COE.

THEN AND NOW.

THE merry, merry lark was up and singing,
And the hare was out and feeding on the lea,
And the merry, merry bells below were ringing,
When my child's laugh rang through me.
Now the hare is snared, and lies dead beside the snow-yard,
And the lark beside the dreary winter sea,
And my baby in his cradle in the church-yard,
Waiteth there until the bells bring me.

THE DYING BOY.

It must be sweet in childhood to give back
The spirit to its Maker; ere the heart
Has grown familiar with the paths of sin,
And sown — to garner up its bitter fruits.
I knew a boy whose infant feet had trod
Upon the blossoms of some seven springs,
And when the eighth came round and called him out
To revel in its light, he turned away,
And sought his chamber to lie down and die.
'T was night, he summoned his accustomed friends,
And in this wise bestowed his last requests: —

"Mother, I'm dying now!
There is deep suffocation in my breas.,
As if some heavy hand my bosom pressed;
And on my brow
I feel the cold sweat stand;
My lips grow dry and tremulous, and my breath
Comes feebly up. O! tell me, is this death?
Mother! your hand —

"Here, lay it on my wrist,
And place the other now beneath my head;
And say, sweet mother, say, when I am dead,
Shall I be miss'd?

"Never, beside your knee,
Shall I kneel down again at night to pray,
Nor with the morning wake, and sing the lay
You taught to me:
O! at the time of prayer,
When you look round and see a vacant seat,
You will not wait then for my coming feet—
You 'll miss me there!

"Father, I'm going home!
To the good home you spoke of: that blessed land
Where it is one bright summer always, and
Storms do not come:
I must be happy then,—
From pain and death you say I shall be free,
That sickness never enters there, and we
Shall meet again!

"Brother! the little spot
I used to call my garden, where long hours
We 've strayed to watch the budding things and flowers,—
Forget it not!
Plant there some box or pine:
Something that lives in winter, and will be
A verdant offering to my memory,
And call it mine.

"Sister! my young rose-tree,
That all the spring hath been my pleasant care,
Just putting forth its leaves so green and fair,
I give to thee;
And when its roses bloom,
I shall be gone away — my short life gone:
But will you not bestow a single one
Upon my tomb?

"Now, mother, sing the tune
You sang last night: I 'm weary, and must sleep;
Who was it called my name? Nay, do not weep;
You 'll all come soon!"

Morning spread over earth her rosy wings,
And that young sufferer, cold and ivory pale,
Lay on his couch asleep. The gentle air
Came through the opening window, freighted with
The savory odors of the early spring:
He breathed it not; the laugh of passers-by
Jarred like a discord in some mournful tune,
But marred not his slumbers. He was dead!

THE OTHER SIDE.

ONCE, in a happy home, a sweet, bright baby died. On the evening of the day, when the children gathered round their mother, all sitting very sorrowful, Alice, the eldest, said, "Mother, you took all the care of baby while she was here, and you carried and held her in your arms all the while she was ill. Now, mother, *who took her on the other side?*" "On the other side of what, Alice?" "On the other side of death; who took the baby on the other side, mother? she was so little she could not go alone." "Jesus met her there," answered the mother. "It is He who took little children in His arms to bless them, and said, 'Suffer them to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven!' He took the baby on the other side."

THE GIFT.

THEN thou, the mother of so sweet a child,
Her false imagined loss cease to lament,
And wisely learn to curb thy sorrows wild
Think what a present thou to God hast sent,
And render Him with patience what He lent.

MILTON.

LITTLE HERBERT.

GATHER all his playthings up;
We shall never see them more,
From his dimpled, dainty hands,
Wildly thrown about the floor.

He is weary of them all,
Cares no more with them to play;
Leaving them, he hallows them:
Lay them lovingly away.

He hath heard the words of blessing,
Bidding little children "Come;"
Earthly love cannot detain him
Longer from his heavenly home.

Fold his little snowy hands,
Lay them gently on his breast;
Now he lieth still and calm,—
Vision fair of perfect rest.

Bless him in his beauty there,—
Bless his solemn slumber deep;
"God's beloved, early crowned
With the mystic sign of "sleep."*

* "He giveth his beloved sleep."

Oft we prayed that angels might
Keep their watch about his bed:
We can trust their vigils now,
They will guard our infant dead.

While the silence in the house
Speaketh to us of our grief,
We will thank our God, who gave
Only for a season brief.

Mild and winning were his ways;
Very happy seemed he here;
Bright the sunshine that he brought
With him from the upper sphere.

One brief year he blessed our home,
Filled our hearts with light and love,
Added to our lives a joy
That can never more remove.

All his grace and innocence
Hath increased our being's store;
What God giveth once is ours,—
Ours, with Him, for evermore.

Now, a little hand is pointing
Heavenward, as we journey on;
May it guide us, and receive us,
When our earthly work is done

MRS. S. F. CLAPP.

CONSOLATION AT THE GRAVE.

Rev. Robert Hall, in speaking of the death of his little son, says, "God dries up the channels, that you may be happily compelled to plunge into an infinite ocean of happiness." Blissful thought! Father, mother, you who mourn over the grave of your little one, look up! know that the chastening rod is in your heavenly Father's hand, and that if He hath taken away, He first did give, and He doeth all things well. He gave you the bud of beauty, and you centred your happiness in its being. He saw that this was not for your good, so He took away the child, whose presence had been as a leaping, sparkling streamlet to your heart's love, that that heart which had before but tasted of earthly, might be lost in the immensity of heavenly love.

LOVE BLESSED, EVEN IN ITS LOSSES.

This truth came borne with bier and pall,
I felt it, when I sorrowed most,
'T is better to have loved and lost,
Than never to have loved at all.

Tennyson.

LITTLE CHARLIE.

A VIOLET grew by the river-side,
And gladdened all hearts with its bloom;
While over the fields, on the scented air,
It breathed a rich perfume.
But the clouds grew dark in the angry sky,
And its portals were opened wide;
And the heavy rain beat down the flower
That grew by the river-side.

Not far away, in a pleasant home,
There lived a little boy,
Whose cheerful face and childish grace
Filled every heart with joy.
He wandered one day to the river's verge,
With no one near to save;
And the heart that we loved with a boundless love
Was stilled in the restless wave.

The sky grew dark to our tearful eyes,
And we bade farewell to joy;
For our hearts were bound by a sorrowful tie
To the grave of the little boy.

The birds still sing in the leafy tree
That shadows the open door;
We heed them not, for we think of the voice
That we shall hear no more.

We think of him at eventide,
And gaze on his vacant chair
With a longing heart, that will scarce believe
That Charlie is not there.
We seem to hear his ringing laugh,
And his bounding step at the door,
But, alas! there comes the sorrowful thought,
We shall never hear them more!

We shall walk sometimes to his little grave
In the pleasant summer hours;
We will speak his name in a softened voice,
And cover his grave with flowers;
We will think of him in his heavenly home,—
His heavenly home so fair;
And we will trust with a hopeful trust
That we shall meet him there.

HORATIO ALGER, JR.

THE DROWNED CHILD.

Push away the dripping ringlets
From the childish brow and fair;
Weep, and kiss the little sleeper,
Lying in his beauty there.

See the eyelid's silken fringes,
Sweeping o'er the cheek of snow;
Never more may tear-drop gather
In the eyes that sparkled so.

Ask the waters if they heard not,
As they gleamed and flashed away,
Sound of angel-pinions, blending
With the music of their spray?

If they saw not, in the sunlight,
Angel forms from heaven come—
Come to bear away our Willie
To his bright and starry home?

LITTLE PILGRIM.

THE PEARL AND THE SHELL.

A HOST of angels flying,
Through cloudless skies impelled,
Upon the earth beheld
A pearl of beauty lying,
Worthy to glitter bright
In heaven's vast halls of light.

They saw, with glances tender,
An infant newly born,
O'er whom life's earliest morn
Just cast its opening splendor:
Virtue it could not know,
Nor vice, nor joy, nor woe.

The blest angelic legion
Greeted its birth above,
And came with looks of love,
From heaven's enchanting region,
Bending their winged way
To where the infant lay.

They spread their pinions o'er it, —
That little pearl which shone
With lustre all its own, —
And then on high they bore it,
Where glory has its birth: —
But left the shell on earth

THE MOTHER'S DREAM.

THERE was once a mother, kneeling by the bedside of the little one whom she hourly expected to lose. With what eyes of passionate love had she watched every change in that beautiful face! How had her eyes pierced the heart of the physician, at his last visit, when they glared rather than asked the question whether there yet was hope! How had she wearied Heaven with vows that if it would but grant — "Ah," you say "you can imagine all that without any difficulty at all." Imagine this too. Overwearied with watching, she fell into a doze beside the couch of her infant, and she dreamt in a few moments (as we are wont to do) the seeming history of long years. She thought she heard a voice from heaven say to her, as to Hezekiah, "I have seen thy tears, I have heard thy prayers; he shall live; and yourself shall have the roll of his history presented to you." "Ah!" you say, "you can imagine all *that* too." And straightway she thought she saw her sweet child in the bloom of health, innocent and playful as her fond heart could wish. Yet a little while, and she saw him in the flush of opening youth; beautiful

as ever, but beautiful as a young panther, from whose eyes wild flashes and fitful passion ever and anon gleamed; and she thought how beautiful he looked, even in these moods, for she was a mother. But she also thought how many tears and sorrows may be needful to temper or quench these fires! And she se med to follow him through a rapid succession of scenes — now of troubled sunshine — now of deep gathering gloom. His sorrows were all of a common lot, but involved a sense of agony far greater than that which *she* would have felt from his early loss; yes, greater even to her — and how much greater to him! She saw him more than once wrestling with pangs more agonizing than those which now threatened his infancy; she saw him involved in error, and with difficulty extricating himself; betrayed into youthful sins, and repenting with scalding tears; she saw him half ruined by transient prosperity, and scourged into tardy wisdom only by long adversity; she saw him worn and haggard with care, — his spirit crushed, and his early beauty all wan and blasted; worse still, she saw him *thrice* stricken with that very shaft which she had so dreaded to feel but once, and mourned to think that her prayers had prevailed to prevent her own sorrows only to multiply his;

worst of all she saw him, as she thought, in a darkened chamber, kneeling beside a coffin in which youth and beauty slept their last sleep; and as it seemed, her own image stood beside him, and uttered unheeded love to a sorrow that "refused to be comforted," and as she gazed on that face of stony despair she seemed to hear a voice which said, "If thou *wilt* have thy floweret of earth unfold on earth, thou must not wonder at bleak winters and inclement skies. *I* would have transplanted it to a more genial clime; but thou wouldest not." And with a cry of terror she awoke. She turned to the sleeping figure before her, and sobbing, *hoped* it was sleeping its last sleep. She listened for his breathing — she heard none; she lifted the taper to his lips — the flame wavered not; he had indeed passed away while she dreamed that he lived; and she rose from her knees, and was *comforted.* "Ah!" you will say, "these sorrows could *never* have been the lot of *my* sweet child!" It is hard to set one's logic against a mother's love; I can only remind you, my dear cousin, that it has been the lot of thousands, whose mothers, as their little ones crowed and laughed in their arms in childish happiness, would have sworn to the same impossibility. But for *you,* — you know

what they could only believe; that it is an impossibility. Nay, I might hint at yet profounder consolation, if, indeed, there ever existed a mother who could fancy that, in the case of her *own* child, it could ever be needed. Yet *facts* sufficiently show us, that what the dreaming mother saw — errors retrieved, sins committed but repented of, and sorrows that taught wisdom — are not always seen, and that children may in spite of all, persist in exploring the path of evil — "deeper and deeper still!" With the shadow of uncertainty whether it may not be so with any child, is there no consolation in thinking that even that shadow has passed away? For aught we know, many and many a mother may hereafter hear her lost darling say — "Sweet mother, I was taken from you a *little* while, only that I might abide with you forever!"

GREYSON LETTERS, BY HENRY ROGERS.

I SEE THEM THERE.

MY beautiful, my blest!
I see them there, by the Great Spirit's throne;
With winning words, and fond beseeching tone,
They woo me to my rest.

THRENODIA.

GONE, gone from us! and shall we see
Those sybil-leaves of destiny,
Those calm eyes, nevermore?
Those deep, dark eyes so warm and bright,
Wherein the features of the man
Lay slumbering in prophetic light,
In characters a child might scan?
So bright, and gone forth utterly!
O stern word — Nevermore!

The stars of those two gentle eyes
Will shine no more on earth;
Quenched are the hopes that had their birth,
As we watched them slowly rise,
Stars of a mother's fate;
And she would read them o'er and o'er,
Pondering as she sate,
Over their dear astrology
Which she had conned and conned before,
Deeming she needs must read aright
What was writ so passing bright.
And yet, alas! she knew not why
Her voice would falter in its song,
And tears would slide from out her eye,
Silent, as they were doing wrong.
O stern word — Nevermore!

The tongue that scarce had learned to claim
An entrance to a mother's heart
By that dear talisman, a mother's name,
Sleeps all forgetful of its art!
I loved to see the infant soul
(How mighty in the weakness
Of its untutored meekness!)
Peep timidly from out its nest,
His lips, the while,
Fluttering with half-fledged words,
Or hushing to a smile
That more than words expressed,
When his glad mother on him stole
And snatched him to her breast!
O, thoughts were brooding in those eyes,
That would have soared like strong-winged birds
Far, far, into the skies,
Gladdening the earth with song,
And gushing harmonies,
Had he but tarried with us long!
O stern word — Nevermore!

How peacefully they rest,
Cross-folded there
Upon his little breast,
Those small, white hands that ne'er were still before,
But ever sported with his mother's hair,

Or the plain cross that on her breast she wore!
Her heart no more will beat
To feel the touch of that soft palm,
That ever seemed a new surprise,
Sending glad thoughts up to her eyes,
To bless him with their holy calm, —
Sweet thoughts! they made her eyes as sweet.
How quiet are the hands
That wove those pleasant bands!
But that they do not rise and sink
With his calm breathing, I should think
That he were dropped asleep.
Alas! too deep, too deep
Is this his slumber;
Time scarce can number
The years ere he will wake again.
O, may we see his eyelids open then!
O stern word — Nevermore!

As the airy gossamere,
Floating in the sunlight clear,
Where'er it toucheth clingeth tightly,
Round glossy leaf or stump unsightly,
So from his spirit wandered out
Tendrils spreading all about,
Knitting all things to its thrall
With a perfect love of all:
O stern word — Nevermore!

He did but float a little way
  Adown the stream of time,
With dreamy eyes watching the ripples play,
  Or listening their fairy chime;
    His slender sail
    Ne'er felt the gale;
He did but float a little way,
  And, putting to the shore,
While yet 't was early day,
Went calmly on his way,
  To dwell with us no more;
No jarring did he feel,
No grating on his vessel's keel;
A strip of silver sand
Mingled the waters with the land
  Where he was seen no more:
  O stern word — Nevermore!

Full short his journey was; no dust
  Of earth unto his sandals clave;
The weary weight that old men must,
  He bore not to the grave.
He seemed a cherub who had lost his way
And wandered hither, so his stay
  With us was short, and 't was most meet
That he should be no delver in earth's clod,
  Nor need to pause and cleanse his feet
To stand before his God:
  O blest word — Evermore!

J. R. Lowell.

GOD KNOWS WHAT IS BEST FOR US.

MOURNER, whatever may be your grief for the death of your children, it might have been still greater for their life. Bitter experience once led a good man to say, "It is better to weep for ten children dead, than for one living." Remember the heart-piercing affliction of David, whose son sought his life. Your love for your children will hardly admit of the thought of such a thing as possible, in your own case. They appeared innocent and amiable; and you fondly believed, that through your care and prayers, they would have become the joy of your hearts. But may not Esau, when a child, have promised as much comfort to his parents as Jacob? Probably he had as many of their prayers and counsels. But as years advanced, he despised their admonitions, and filled their hearts with grief. As a promoter of family religion, who ever received such an encomium from the God of heaven as Abraham? How tenderly did the good man pray for Ishmael! "O that Ishmael might live before Thee!" Yet how little comfort did Ishmael afford.

Alas! in these days of degeneracy, parents much more frequently witness the vices of their children, than their virtues. And even should your children prove amiable and promising, you might live to be the wretched witness of their sufferings. Some parents have felt unutterable agonies of this kind.

God may have taken the lamented objects of your affection from the evil to come. When extraordinary calamities are coming on the world, He frequently hides some of His feebler children in the grave. Surely, at such a portentous period, it is happier for such as are prepared, to be lodged in that peaceful mansion, than to be exposed to calamities and distresses here. Thus intimates the prophet Jeremiah, "Weep not for the dead, neither bemoan him; but weep sore for him that goeth away; for he shall return no more, nor see his native country." It was in a day when the faith and patience of the saints were peculiarly tried, that the voice from heaven said, "Write, blessed are the dead, which die in the Lord, from henceforth."

FLAVEL.

TO A DEPARTED CHILD.

I YIELD thee unto higher spheres ;
I bend my head and say, " Thy will,
Not mine, be done," though bitter tears
The while mine eyelids fill.

I know thou hast escaped the blight
That wilts us here, and entered now
To perfect day, — though in the night
Bereft of thee we bow.

And yet thy little sunny life
Was beautiful as it was brief:
It was not vexed by pain or strife,
It knew but little grief.

The sunshine from our house is gone,
And from our hearts their peace and joy;
We feel so terribly alone
Without thee, dearest boy !

Thou mad'st us feel how very fair
God's earth could be, and taught us love;
And in life's tapestry of care
A golden figure wove.

Brave as we will our hearts to bear,
Grief will not wholly be denied;
The ineffectual dikes we rear
Go down before its tide.

We lie all prostrate,—cannot feel
God's love; we only cry aloud,
"O God! O God!" for all things reel,
And God hides in a cloud.

We blindly wail, for we are maimed
Beyond repair, until at last
He lifts us up,—all bleeding, lamed,
And shattered by the blast.

He asks, "And would you wish him back,
Whom I have taken to my joy,—
Drag downward to life's narrow track
Your little spirit boy?"

"No! no!" the spirit makes reply,—
"Not back to earthly chance and pain;"
"Yet ah!" the shattered senses cry,
"Would he were here again!"

He was so meshed within our love
That all our heart-strings bleeding lie,
And all fond hopes we round him wove
Are now but agony.

Yet let us suffer; he is freed,
And on our tears a bridge of light
Is built by God, his steps to lead
To joys beyond our sight.

WILLIAM W. STORY.

EPITAPH FROM AN IRISH COUNTRY CHURCHYARD.

A LITTLE spirit slumbers here,
Who to one heart was very dear.
Oh! he was more than life or light,
Its thought by day — its dream by night!
The chill winds came — the young flower faded
And died — the grave its sweetness shaded.
Fair boy! thou shouldst have wept for me,
Not I have had to mourn o'er thee;
Yet not long shall this sorrowing be —
Those roses I have planted round,
To deck thy dear and sacred ground,
When spring-gales next those roses wave
They'll blush upon thy mother's grave.

LITTLE CHILDREN KNOCKING AT THE GATE OF HEAVEN.

HARK! at heaven's crystal gates
Little hands are faintly sounding,
While a guardian angel waits,
All her soul with rapture bounding;
To that angel it is given,
For her holy life on earth,
To receive three babes in heaven,
In their new celestial birth.

A timid hand at first essays
To undo the portal fair,
And the angel veils the blaze
Of the glory everywhere;
"I am lonely, I am lonely!
Now I see no darling brother,
No fond father! Angel, only, —
Take, O take me to my mother!"

But the angel, with caresses,
Gently leads the cherub in,
And the young immortal blesses,
Saved from sorrow and from sin.

Soon the little stranger's fright
Passes like a cloud away,
While the day that knows no night
Shines upon her heavenly play.

Hark again! a gentle tap
Echoes through the angel's heart;
And the child upon her lap
In her sacred joy has part:—
Little arms enfold the stranger,
Little lips the kiss have given;
"Here 's no sorrow, here 's no danger!
Darling sister, this is heaven!"

Yet again, and louder sounding,
Falls a knock on heaven's gate,—
And the infant cherubs bounding,
Will not let their brother wait;
Eyes that closed in weariness,
Lips that murmured sad farewell,
Open in celestial bliss
With the sisters loved so well.

Now their angel with delight
Leads them onward, hand in hand,
And reveals to eager sight
Glories of the spirit-land.

Happy children! thus to flee
Early to their home above!
Happy those below, to be
Upward drawn by chords of love!

SUBMISSION.

LIKE a bowed lily lies her fair young head:
Cold in her shroud: colder the heart below!
No more the feverish pulses come and go;
The watchers are the watchers of the dead.

Sad eyes that saw her fade, are full of tears;
Fond hands that smoothed her pillow, clasped in prayer;
And love goes wailing in its dark despair,
Till the sweet dawning of God's grace appears

O blest the soul whose lips of faith can say
In the storm lulls of grief — "Thy will be done!"
O blest the soul that trusts that Holy One,
Who in His bosom bears His lambs away!

HARRIET MCEWEN KIMBALL.

THE LOSS OF A CHILD.

To those who have lost a child, — who have seen the little one, whose prattling joy had been the sweet music that cheered the sorrowing hour, go down with a disease as a plucked flower withers before the scorching sun, — it is sad to read an obituary notice even of a stranger child. The loss of a sweet and beloved child is a sorrow of which none but those who have suffered can have the least realizing sense; it is unlike that of any other relation; it is not like the tearing off simply of a limb, but unwinding and breaking to pieces the little tendrils that have grown around the heart and become part of one's self. It is the opening of all the feelings, and pouring sorrow in at every pore. From the first recognition of the child, when it turns its infant eye upon its parents, hope, expectation, and joy, mingled with the dread of some unforeseen difficulty or sorrow, spring up in the soul and grow with its growth, and strengthen with its strength, until they become the leading feature of our affections. What the little one *will be*, more than what he *is*, is what we love. What we hope for, and what we expect, more than what we see and know, are the ties that

bind us to our children. Every development of character, every new sign of increasing knowledge, every new idea or thought, or show of reason, is noticed, caught up, and loved; and we clasp them every day to our breast with new emotions and stronger affections. The first smile creates a new affection, the laugh another; the recognition adds its tendril, the first step, the asking look, the sign of joy at being understood, the new plea for something desired, the attempt to do some manly act, — all add, one after another, a strand to the chords that bind the child to the parent's heart; we live in the joy of hope and bright expectation, — hope it will become a still greater object of pride, in increasing joy and delight. Thus the little one, in whom we live ourselves, binds itself, day by day, stronger and stronger to our hearts and affections, until it becomes a part of our existence, and its separation and death the most agonizing of all conceivable sorrow. Death, at all times, even under the least trying circumstances, is a sad thing, and leaves its mark deep in the memory of the living; but the death of a bright, cheerful, happy child, whose laugh has rung out sweet and clear as the song of the morning lark, and echoed through every room with a sweeter music; whose tottering steps and

prattling tongue ever gave joy to the household, and whose pleasant, gleeful mirth touched every ear, and brought a quick response, — who gave delight to all, and was really a well-spring of pleasure to the soul, — leaves an impression never to be effaced. It changes joy into sadness, and gives a gloomy, dark and sorrowful shade to everything that before was pleasant and agreeable. The doors creak louder on their hinges — the unfrequented rooms are stiller. darker, gloomier — the wind has a deeper moan — the very sunshine and the storm seem to speak in subdued tones. The vacant chair at the table. the empty crib, the little shoes on the shelf, the hat on the hook, the broken toy, the little wagon — all say "He is gone." "Dead" is written on the knobs of the doors, engraved on the windows, and stamped on everything. The trees, the flowers, the ripening fruit, and the waving harvest, echo back, "He is gone!" Tears start unbidden from the eyes, and the deepest affections of the soul gush forth in sorrow and anguish.

NATHANIEL R. STIMSON.

OUR BESSIE.

Our Bessie was as sweet a girl
As ever happy mother kissed,
And when our Father called her home,
How sadly was she missed!
For, grave or gay, or well or ill,
She had her thousand winning ways,
And mingled youthful innocence
With all her tasks and plays.

How softly beamed her happy smile,
Which played around the sweetest mouth
That ever fashioned infant words;
The sunshine of the south,
Mellowed and soft, was in her eye,
And brightened through her golden hair;
And all that lived and loved, I ween,
Did her affection share.

With reverent voice she breathed her prayer,
With gentlest tones she sung her hymn;
And when she talked of heaven, our eyes
With tears of joy were dim.
Yet in our selfish grief we wept,
When last her lips upon us smiled;
O! could we, when our Father called,
Detain the happy child?

Our home is poor, and cold our clime,
And misery mingles with our mirth;
'T was meet our Bessie should depart
From such a weary earth.
O! she is safe — no cloud can dim
The brightness of her ransomed soul;
Nor trials vex, nor tempter lure
Her spirit from its goal.

We wrapt her in her snow-white shroud,
And crossed, with sadly tender care,
Her little hands upon her breast,
And smoothed her sunny hair.
We kissed her cheek, and kissed her brow,
And if aright we read the smile
That lingered on the dear one's lips,
It told of heaven the while!

W. H. BURLEIGH.

GRIEF.

GRIEF fills the room up of my absent child,
Lies in his bed, walks up and down with me:
Puts on his pretty looks, repeats his words,
Remembers me of all his gracious parts,
Stuffs out his vacant garments with his form:
Then have I reason to be fond of grief.

SHAKSPEARE.

CASA WAPPY.*

And hast thou sought thy heavenly home,
Our fond, dear boy —
The realms where sorrow dare not come,
Where life is joy?
Pure at thy death as at thy birth,
Thy spirit caught no taint from earth;
Even by its bliss we mete our death,
Casa Wappy!

Despair was in our last farewell,
As closed thine eye;
Tears of our anguish may not tell
When thou didst die;
Words may not paint our grief for thee,
Sighs are but bubbles on the sea
Of our unfathomed agony,
Casa Wappy!

Thou wert a vision of delight
To bless us given;
Beauty embodied to our sight,
A type of heaven;

* The self-conferred pet name of an infant son of the poet, snatched away after a very brief illness.

So dear to us thou wert, thou art
Even less thine own self than a part
Of mine and of thy mother's heart,
Casa Wappy!

Thy bright brief day knew no decline,
'T was cloudless joy;
Sunrise and night alone were thine,
Beloved boy!
This morn beheld thee blithe and gay,
That found thee prostrate in decay,
And ere a third shone, clay was clay,
Casa Wappy!

Gem of our hearth, our household pride,
Earth's undefiled!
Could love have saved, thou hadst not died,
Our dear, sweet child!
Humbly we bow to fate's decree;
Yet had we hoped that time should see
Thee mourn for us, not us for thee,
Casa Wappy!

Do what I may, go where I will,
Thou meet'st my sight;
There dost thou glide before me still,
A form of light!

I feel thy breath upon my cheek —
I see thee smile, I hear thee speak —
Till, oh! my heart is like to break,
Casa Wappy!

Methinks thou smil'st before me now,
With glance of stealth;
The hair thrown back from thy full brow
In buoyant health;
I see thine eyes' deep violet light,
Thy dimpled cheek carnationed bright,
Thy clasping arms so round and white,
Casa Wappy!

The nursery shows thy pictured wall,
Thy bat, thy bow,
Thy cloak and bonnet, club and ball:
But where art thou?
A corner holds thine empty chair,
Thy playthings, idly scattered there,
But speak to us of our despair,
Casa Wappy!

Even to the last thy every word —
To glad, to grieve —
Was sweet as sweetest song of bird
On summer's eve;

In outward beauty undecayed,
Death o'er thy spirit cast no shade,
And, like the rainbow, thou didst fade,
Casa Wappy!

We mourn for thee when blind, blank night
The chamber fills;
We pine for thee when morn's first light
Reddens the hills;
The sun, the moon, the stars, the sea,
All, to the wall flower and wild pea,
Are changed — we saw the world through thee,
Casa Wappy!

And though, perchance, a smile may gleam
Of casual mirth,
It doth not own, whate'er may seem,
An inward birth;
We miss thy small step on the stair;
We miss thee at thine evening prayer!
All day we miss thee everywhere,
Casa Wappy!

Snows muffled earth when thou didst go,
In life's spring-bloom,
Down to the appointed house below,
The silent tomb.

But now the green leaves of the tree,
The cuckoo and the "busy bee,"
Return — but with them bring not thee,
Casa Wappy!

'T is so; but can it be, (while flowers
Revive again) —
Man's doom, in death that we and ours
For aye remain?
O! can it be that o'er the grave
The grass renewed shall yearly wave,
Yet God forget our child to save? —
Casa Wappy!

It cannot be; for were it so
Thus man could die,
Life were a mockery; Thought were wo,
And Truth a lie;
Heaven were a coinage of the brain,
Religion frenzy, Virtue vain,
And all our hopes to meet again
Casa Wappy!

Then be to us, O dear, lost child!
With beam of love,
A star, death's uncongenial wild
Smiling above.

Soon, soon thy little feet have trod
The skyward path, the seraph's road,
That led thee back from man to God,
Casa Wappy!

Yes, 't is sweet balm to our despair,
Fond, fairest boy,
That heaven is God's, and thou art there,
With Him in joy;
There past are death and all its woes,
There beauty's stream forever flows,
And pleasure's day no sunset knows,
Casa Wappy!

Farewell, then — for awhile, farewell —
Pride of my heart!
It cannot be that long we dwell,
Thus torn apart;
Time's shadows like the shuttle flee;
And, dark howe'er life's night may be,
Beyond the grave I 'll meet with thee,
Casa Wappy!

D. M. MOIR.

How the world falls to pieces round about us,
And leaves us in a ruin of our joy!

YOUNG.

TO MY CHILD.

COME back to me, my child! I call thee ever,
All the day long I listen for thy voice,—
The ringing laugh that made my heart rejoice;
I miss it 'midst life's languishment and fever!
For thy blue eyes of love and light I pine,—
Thy twining arms — thy frequent soft caress:
Like balmiest summer, stole thy lips to mine.
Oh! at still eve, my heart how didst thou bless!
Come back, my child! I wander hopeless-hearted
Where'er thy little feet have dancing stray'd;
Sad is the home whence thy sweet face hath parted —
Silent the nursery where thou 'st prattling played!
Earth wears for me but one unvarying gloom,
O'ershadowed by the thought that thou art in the tomb!

Come back to me, my child! though but in dreams —
Thine angel-image let me clasp once more!
If, haply, o'er my couch still slumber gleams,
The night-time may thy rosy lips restore,—

Thy downy cheek laid lovingly to mine,—
Thy sweet "my mother," in thy dreaming sleep—
While thy small arms around me closer twine.
My idol-boy! I wake to weep,
Never again on earth shall I behold thee!
Thou 'st left my side, and gone to other rest!
My child! I know the Saviour's arms enfold thee,—
I know thou leanest on his pitying breast,
A blessed lot! My child! O, ask for me,
That where thy home is, mine ere long may be!

MRS. E. J. EAMES.

BEYOND THE RIVER.

THERE are our loved ones in their rest;
They 've crossed Time's river — now no more
They heed the bubbles on its breast,
Nor feel the storms that sweep its shore
But *there* pure love can live, can last—
They look for *us* their home to share:
When we in turn away have passed,
What joyful greetings wait us there,
Beyond the river.

WHEN the wind blows, the blossoms fall;
But a good God reigns over all!

DEW.

"O, DEAREST mother, tell me, pray,
Why are the dewdrops gone so soon?
Could they not stay till close of day,
To twinkle on the flowery spray,
Or on the field till noon?"

"My child, 't is said such beauteous things,
Too often loved with vain excess,
Are swept away by angel-wings,
Before contamination clings
To their pure loveliness.

"Behold yon rainbow brightening yet,
To which all mingled hues are given;
There are thy dew-drops, grandly set
In a resplendent coronet
Upon the brow of Heaven.

"No earthly stain can reach them there;
Woven with sunbeams there they shine,
A transient vision of the air,
But yet a symbol pure and fair,
Of love and peace divine."

The child looked upward into space
With eager and enquiring eyes,
And o'er its sweet and thoughtful face
Came a faint glory, and a grace
Transmitted from the skies.

With the last odorous sigh of May,
That child beneath the flowers was laid;
Like dew, its spirit passed away
To mingle in eternal day,
With angels perfect made.

HOUSEHOLD WORDS.

MY CHILD.

A LIGHT is from our household gone,
A voice we loved is stilled.
A place is vacant at our hearth
Which never can be filled;
A gentle heart, that throbbed but now
With tenderness and love,
Has hushed its weary throbbings here,
To throb in bliss above.
Yes, to the home where angels are,
Her trusting soul has fled,
And yet we bend above the tomb
With tears, and call her dead.
We call her dead, but ah! we know
She dwells where living waters flow.

THE LITTLE BOY'S BURIAL.

Two dark-eyed maids, at shut of day,
Sat where a river rolled away,
With calm, sad brows, and raven hair,
And one was pale, and both were fair.

Bring flowers, they sang, bring flowers unblown,
Bring forest blooms of name unknown;
Bring budding sprays from wood and wild,
To strew the bier of Love, the child.

Close softly, fondly, while ye weep,
His eyes, that death may seem like sleep,
And fold his hands in sign of rest,
His waxen hands, across his breast.

And make his grave where violets hide,
Where star-flowers strew the rivulet's side,
And blue-birds in the misty spring
Of cloudless skies and summer sing.

Place near him, as ye lay him low,
His idle shafts, his loosened bow,
The silken fillet that around
His waggish eyes in sport he wound.

But we shall mourn him long, and miss
His ready smile, his ready kiss,
The patter of his little feet,
Sweet frowns and stammered phrases sweet;

And graver looks, serene and high,
A light of heaven in that young eye,
All these shall haunt us till the heart
Shall ache and ache — and tears will start.

The bow, the band shall fall to dust,
The shining arrows waste with rust,
And all of Love that earth can claim,
Be but a memory and a name.

Not thus his nobler part shall dwell,
A prisoner in this narrow cell;
But he whom now we hide from men,
In the dark ground, shall live again.

Shall break these clods, a form of light,
With nobler mien, and purer sight,
And in the eternal glory stand,
Highest and nearest God's right hand.

BRYANT.

AFFLICTION is the good man's shining scene;
Prosperity conceals his brightest ray,
As night to stars, nor lustre gives to man.

CAN I WISH HIM BACK AGAIN?

COULD I wish that this young inhabitant of heaven should be degraded to earth again? Or would it thank me for that wish? Would it say that it was the part of a wise parent, to call it down from a sphere of such exalted services and pleasures, to our low life here upon earth? Let me rather be thankful for the pleasing hope, that though God loves my child too well to permit it to return to me, he will, ere long, bring me to it. And then that endeared paternal affection, which would have been a cord to tie me to earth, and have added new pangs to my removal from it, will be as a golden chain to draw me upwards, and add one further charm and joy even to paradise itself.

DODDRIDGE.

THE FIRST TENANT.

AND now one of our family is gone to take possession of the sepulchre in all our names. Ere long I shall lie down with my child. It is a warning of Providence, that these concluding days of my life may be more regular, more spiritual, more useful, than the former.

DEAD LITTLE ONES.

"The harp of heaven
Had lacked its least, but not its meanest string,
Had children not been taught to play upon it."

BEREAVED mother! take comfort in the thought that your little ones are safe in the heavenly home. A father once said, "I have had six children; and I bless God that they are all either *with* Christ, or *in* Christ, and my mind is now at rest concerning them. My desire was that they should have served Christ on earth; but if God will choose to have them rather serve him in heaven, *I have nothing to object to it.*"

Mother! listen! Two dear children were one day seen very ill in the same room; the oldest of the two was heard frequently attempting to teach the younger one to pronounce the word "Hallelujah!" but without success; the dear little one died before he could repeat it. When his brother was told of his death, he was silent for a moment, and then looking up at his mother, said, "Johnny can say 'Hallelujah' now, mother!" In a few hours the two little brothers were united in heaven, singing "Hallelujah!" together. Mothers! many of your

little ones could not sing the praises of their Redeemer, while resting in your arms, but they have been taught the music of the upper temple now, and they sing among the celestial choristers!

DEATH'S GENTLEST STROKE.

THE soul of the cherub child, that dies on its mother's breast, wings its way to heaven, unconscious of the joys it might share here, as well as of the many, many miseries of which it might be partaker. This can hardly be called *death*. It is but the calm, soft ebbing of the gentle tide of life, to flow no more in the troubled ocean of existence; it is but the removal of a fair creature, — "too pure for earthly stay," — to make one of that bright band of cherubim which encompasses in glory and in joy the throne of the living God.

THEY only truly mourn the dead, who endeavor so to live as to insure a reunion in heaven.

THE CHANGELING.

I HAD a little daughter,
And she was given to me
To lead me gently backward
To the Heavenly Father's knee,
That I, by the force of nature,
Might in some dim wise divine
The depth of His infinite patience
To this wayward soul of mine.

I knew not how others saw her,
But to me she was wholly fair,
And the light of the heaven she came from
Still lingered and gleamed in her hair;
For it was as wavy and golden,
And as many changes took,
As the shadows of sun-gilt ripples
On the yellow bed of a brook.

To what can I liken her smiling
Upon me, her kneeling lover?
How it leaped from her lips to her eyelids,
And dimpled her wholly over,
Till her outstretched hands smiled also,
And I almost seemed to see
The very heart of her mother
Sending sun through her veins to me!

She had been with us scarce a twelvemonth,
And it hardly seemed a day,
When a troop of wandering angels
Stole my little daughter away;
Or perhaps those heavenly Zingari
But loosed the hampering strings,
And when they had opened her cage door,
My little bird used her wings.

And they have left in her stead a changeling,
A little angel child,
That seems like her bud in full blossom,
And smiles as she never smiled:
When I wake in the morning, I see it
Where she always used to lie,
And I feel as weak as a violet
Alone 'neath the awful sky.

As weak, yet as trustful also;
For the whole year long I see
All the wonders of faithful nature
Still worked for the love of me;
Winds wander, and dews drip earthward,
Rain falls, suns rise and set,
Earth whirls, and all but to prosper
A poor little violet.

This child is not mine as the first was,
I cannot sing it to rest,
I cannot lift it up fatherly
And bliss it upon my breast;
Yet it lies in my little one's cradle,
And sits in my little one's chair,
And the light of the heaven she 's gone to
Transfigures its golden hair.

J. R. LOWELL.

NO BITTER TEARS FOR THEE.

No bitter tears for thee be shed,
Blossom of being! seen and gone!
With flowers alone we strew thy bed,
O, ever dear, departed one!
Whose all of life, a rosy ray,
Blushed into dawn, and passed away.

O! had'st thou still on earth remained,
Vision of beauty! fair as brief!
How soon thy brightness had been stained
With passion or with grief!
Now, not a sullying breath can rise,
To dim thy glory in the skies.

WORDS OF COMFORT.

* * * * And when we couple with this the known disposition of our great Forerunner, the love that He manifested to children on earth, how He suffered them to approach His person, and lavishing endearment and kindness upon them in the streets of Jerusalem, told His disciples, that the presence and company of such as these in heaven formed one ingredient of the joy that was set before Him; tell us if Christianity does not throw a pleasing radiance around an infant's tomb? And should any parent who hears us, feel softened by the touching remembrance of a light that twinkled a few short months under his roof, and at the end of its little period expired, we cannot think that we venture too far, when we say, that he has only to persevere in the faith, and in the following of the gospel, and that very light will again shine upon him in heaven. The blossom which withered here upon its stalk, has been transplanted there to a place of endurance; and there it will then gladden that eye which now weeps out the agony of an affection that has been sorely wounded; and in the name of Him who, if on earth, would have wept along with

them, do we bid all believers present, to sorrow not even as others which have no hope, but to take comfort in the thought of that country where there is no sorrow and no separation.

CHALMERS.

DUTY IN SEASONS OF AFFLICTION.

WHO can say, even after the severest loss, I have no duties, no cares, in life remaining? Much less can a tender mother say it, who has still so many looking to her advice, and what is almost more, to her example. It is not the smallest part of the good that you may do them, to let them see what effect great trials have upon your mind, and that Christianity enables you to bear up against such a stroke.

HANNAH MORE.

SORROW.

HE that lacks time to mourn lacks time to mend.
Eternity mourns that. 'T is an ill cure
For life's worst ills, to have no time to feel them.
Where sorrow's held instrusive, and turned out,
There wisdom will not enter, nor true power,
Nor aught that dignifies humanity.

HENRY TAYLOR.

A BEAUTIFUL THOUGHT.

LEIGH HUNT says, "Those who have lost an infant, are never, as it were, without an infant child. They are the only persons who in one sense retain it always, and they furnish other parents with the same idea. The other children grow up to manhood and womanhood, and suffer all the changes of mortality. This one alone is rendered an immortal child."

A FATHER'S GRIEF.

CAN anything better express the utter desolation of a father's heart than the touching, heart-rending exclamation of the King of Israel, which is engraven upon a tomb in the cemetery of *Pere le Chaise*, near Paris?

Mon fils, mon fils!
Plut à Dieu que je fusse
Mort moi-même pour toi!

OUR LITTLE SPOT OF LAND.

We have a little spot of land,
(I mean my wife and I,
For we are partners joint on earth,
Where our possessions lie:)
Just o'er the village-green 't is found.
Close by a shady dell,
Where silence reigns — except when death
Rings out a solemn knell.

We have no title-deed of land
Besides this narrow spot;
Others can boast their ample farms;
We have this little lot;
The grass waves sweetly o'er it when
The summer air is bland;
T is worth — 't is worth — we cannot rate
Our little spot of land.

We 've read of islets far away,
Where balmy gales blow free;
Fair islets of the earth that lie
Like emeralds on the sea;
But not for these far distant isles,
By spicy breezes fanned,
Would we exchange this humble claim —
Our little spot of land.

There 's Ind beyond the rolling main,
  Renowned for jewels bright;
And yet with all her treasures told,
  Her pearls and gems of light,
Her mines of wealth and sparkling streams
  That roll o'er golden sand,
She charms us not — when once we view
  Our little spot of land.

Nay, bring the gold of every clime,
  The wealth of every shore;
Let ocean yield her riches up —
  And lay them at our door:
Then swell the pile a thousand fold
  By some enchanter's wand; —
The whole can never buy of us
  Our little spot of land.

Ah, no! A dearer treasure this
  To hearts that once have bled,
Though neither pearls nor rubies lie
  Within its grassy bed;
'T is all the land we 've title to,
  And *this* deep sorrow gave;
Our tears have watered it as rain, —
  It is our infant's grave.

THE HAPPY HOME.